

PS *Extreme*

Volume 2 • Issue 1 • December 1996

THE PLAYER'S UNOFFICIAL MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE PLAYSTATION

TOMB RAIDER

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REVIEWED THIS ISSUE:

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DISRUPTOR

NHL 97

PANDEMONIUM!

MACHINEHEAD

CONTRA

ROBOTRON X

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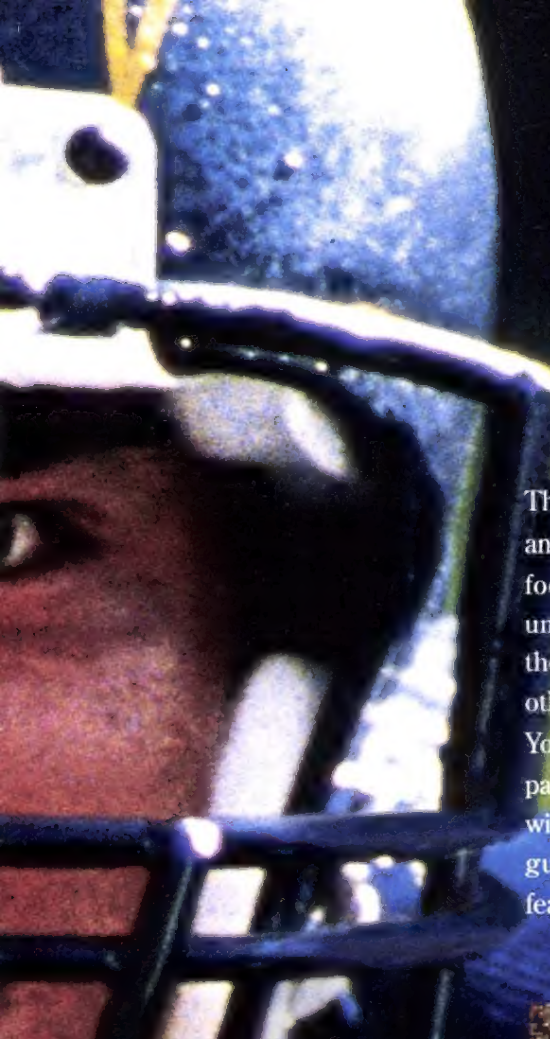
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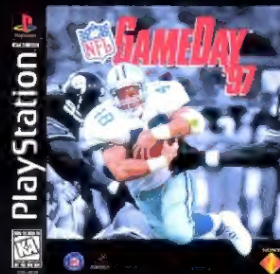


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BUBSY 3D



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EXNEWS: Page 16

Sony drops the hammer hard on PlayStation pirates ... lawsuits are being passed out like chachkies.

EXECUTE: Page 22

Cheats for Formula 1, International Track & Field, NCAA GameBreaker and Time Commando, plus mini-strategies for Blast Chamber & Pitball and a HUGE walk-through for Alone in the Dark. All that plus GameShark codes, that's nice!

EXPECTING: Page 34

NBA In the Zone 2, Mech Warrior 2, Suikoden, Crusader, Lomax, Jet Moto, Cool Boarders, Dare Devil Derby, Gameday '97, Resident Evil 2, The Divide, PowerSlave and more, is what's in store, starting at page thirty-four.

EXTREME: Page 62

Can it be? The first 99% in the history of PSExtreme?! Read all about it.

EXRATED: Page 68

This month: Street Racer, Blast Chamber, Soviet Strike, Disrupter, MLB Pennant Race, Bubsy 3D, Pandemonium!, NHL Face Off '97, NHL '97, Machine Head, Contra and a whole bunch of other fine softs.

EXPORT: Page 116

Real big import action this month for you and us: Cart Duel, Speed Racer, Power Rangers Pinball, Psychic Force, and International Moto.

IN THE EXTREME



Although I'm writing this column in mid-October, the holiday season is upon us and with it comes the biggest selling period for the video game industry. More than likely, you are picking this magazine up at your local newsstand or retailer, or it just found its way into your mailbox, a few days before Thanksgiving. Between mid-November and Christmas you will see more software hit the shelves than shipped during 11 months prior to this. Why? Well, that's a good question, and I'm not sure I can answer it authoritatively, but I'll give it my best shot.

Obviously, it all begins and ends with Christmas/Hanukkah shopping. With the PlayStation now selling for \$199, the price point has become more attractive to parents looking to give their children the 'big' holiday gift (the one that will have them doing their chores with smiles on their faces ... for at least two days). There is a very real possibility that the number of people buying the PS in the next 45 days will equal the number of consumers in the US that currently own the system. Not coincidentally, software publishers want to take a bite out of your holiday spending and they are positioning their titles so that, when mom and dad come into the store and ask for help in picking out the perfect present, their game will be fresh in the retailer's mind. Does it work? Most of the time. But, the games that will be most successful are those that have the legs to carry into March and April of next year. The holidays are just the beginning. What do all of those new PlayStation owners want come the new year? That's right, more software!

For PS owners looking forward to what

Santa will put under the tree, there are a number of 'Gold' titles that are worthy of sliding down your chimney. While we will be handing out the first annual PSExtreme awards for the best software of 1996 in our January issue, I'll give you a sneak peak by listing my personal top ten among games released over the past few months (and those due out by the end of the year).

1. Tomb Raider, Eidos Interactive
2. Crash Bandicoot, Sony Computer Entertainment
3. NFL GameDay '97, Sony Computer Entertainment
4. NCAA GameBreaker, Sony Computer Entertainment
5. Formula 1, Psygnosis
6. In the Zone 2, Konami
7. Motor Toon Grand Prix, Sony Computer Entertainment
8. Die Hard Trilogy, Fox Interactive
9. Bubsy 3D, Accolade
10. Pandemonium, Crystal Dynamics

Obviously, this is a very personal list and it does not necessarily reflect the preferences of our entire staff. (I will readily admit that I lean heavily toward the sports/driving end of things and shy away from fighting games (thus the omission of Tekken 2). But, it does reflect what I take home with me and what I spend most of my free time playing.

I hope that you enjoy our December issue (our biggest yet) and that the holiday season finds you happy, healthy and loaded up with PlayStation goodies!

Dave

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**In 2096 Having a Bomb
Strapped to You is a Sport.**



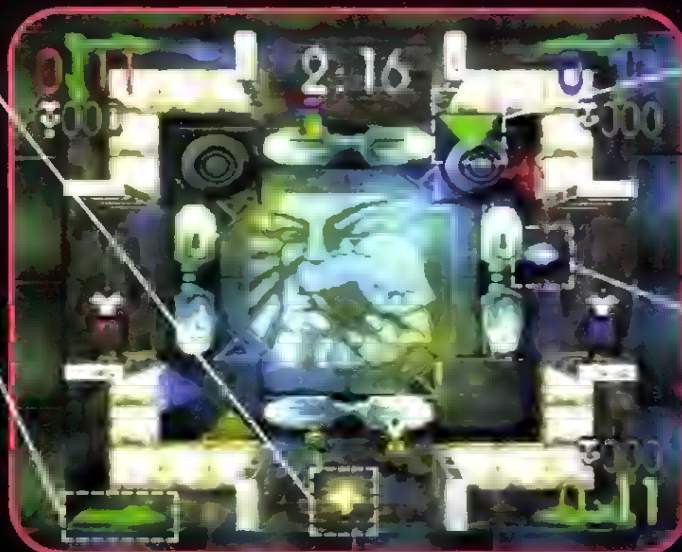
[Want to Play?]

The Crystal

Drop it in
your reactor
to increase
your time.

The Kickers

Kicking these
rotates the
chamber
90 degrees.

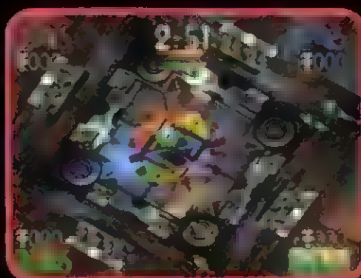


The Reactors

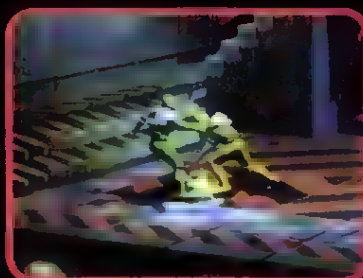
Drop the crystal
in an opponent's
reactor to drain
his Kill-Clock.

The Power-Ups

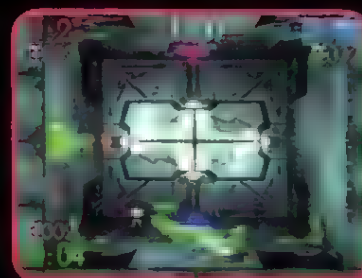
Hi-Jumps,
Crystal Bombs,
Mercuries, Mag
Boots & more.



Your arena is a rotating chamber...
Turn it left. Turn it right.
Turn the wall into a floor.



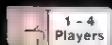
Your goal is survival...
In this multiplayer deathmatch,
it's every man for himself.



Your opponent is time...
Because when your clock hits zero,
you're cooked.

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A note from Toolie:

The mail this month was dominated by the Madden '97/NCAA GameBreaker debate. In the October 1996 issue of PSExtreme we gave Madden '97 a Bronze with a score of 77%, and game NCAA GameBreaker a Gold 98%. There have been heated opinions on both sides and a number of letters passionately argued the author's point(s) (in most cases, TOO passionately to be printed in a 'family' magazine.) This month, we figured, given the level of controversy that this debate has created, that we'd give Dave a chance to summarize his response and address the many issues raised in these letters.

Dear Readers,

We have received many letters and phone calls from players on both sides of the GameBreaker/Madden issue — some have called me an idiot and accused me of taking payola from Sony, and some have applauded us for being the only video game magazine to "tell it like it is"

The interesting aspect of all this debate is not the reviews themselves, but the passion with which the arguments, both pro and con, are being offered by the sports fans among our readers. There are many out there who believe that football begins and ends with Madden and EA Sports — no game dare challenge their "unquestioned" dominance in the category, lest it feel the wrath of the Madden-faithful. We received a great many letters where the writer had absolutely nothing to say about the quality of Madden, but they were incensed that WE found fault with the product (most of them had not played or purchased GameBreaker). There's a term for this in sports; it's called being a "homer" (you know, my team ... right, wrong or indifferent). I might also add that we received but two letters written specifically to criticize NCAA GameBreaker. My evaluation of Madden '97 was over 1,000 words in length — and it was a fair analysis of the game's strengths and weaknesses. I've read the reviews in other magazines — most of them are about 80 words and begin and end with something like "EA Sports does it again". In between the start and finish is a features list. I simply can't give that kind of review. We pride ourselves on giving fair, even-handed reviews that are the result of many, many hours of gameplay. Most games we beat, and I can tell you that, when I review a sports title, you can be assured, next to the game publisher's product testers, no one has played it more. A few letters questioned my truthfulness in posting the stat's that I accumulated in playing as the Jets vs. the All-Madden squad. No, I didn't lie, it happened the very first time I played the game — which is irritating enough, and I can pretty much do it at will. However, the issue at hand with Madden/GameBreaker is no different than any other category of software that we review within our pages. You want to know how to spend your gaming dollar. We try to give you the most objective opinion on how to spend it. If you LOVE McDonald's and think they make the best hamburgers on the planet, me telling you that Wendy's makes a tastier belly-buster is not going to make a bit of difference to you — the same thing is at work here. In this very issue, the subject will come up again. We have given a 'Silver' rating to Sony's MLB Pennant Race (as opposed to EA's Triple Play and its lofty 'Gold' status) and Eric, who has been writing hockey reviews for the past four years, thinks NHL Face Off '97 is the best sports product he's ever played (he did, however, also enjoy EA's NHL '97, unlike my Madden experience). You may not agree, but there IS a method to this process, and, above all, it is brutally honest (at

times) and very fair...

There are two questions that we always ask ourselves when reviewing a game: "Would I spend MY money on it?" and "Do I see myself pulling this one off of the shelf six months from now?" With regard to our two football games, it was very simple. I found one game to be loads of fun and the other to be a tedious affair. All of the video and sound bites and broadcast style, etc., etc. is not going to make up for uninspired gameplay. A PlayStation game costs \$60-\$70, watching a game on TV is free. If I want to watch a game, I'll keep my money in my pocket. If you disagree, you disagree — that's your right. As far as any bias for Sony, give me a break. We have reviewed 6 EA Sports games over the life of PSExtreme: three Gold (FIFA '96, Triple Play '97 and PGA '96), two Silver (NBA Live '96 and Andreia Racing) and one Bronze (Madden '97). We stand on our record.

Dave Winding

Dear PSExtreme,

A few months ago I wrote a letter to you in hopes that you would respond. I have given up any hope that yet the response might still appear in my mail box. Perhaps my letter was lost in the mail. In the case that it was, I wrote a copy of the letter below. Please write back.

I was wondering if Dune or any Dune type games will ever be produced for the PlayStation? If there are any, I would like to know about them. Also, will Command and Conquer ever be formatted for the PlayStation? Any information you can give me would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Scott Helm
Walland, TN

We really, really wish we could write back to all the people who ask to be written back to. Unfortunately, there's just not enough time to personally answer each letter we get. Writing back to people would end up being a full time job. So, all you good people who write in asking for a reply, rest assured that we do read each and every letter and we try to answer your questions indirectly by making sure that the information you're looking for will be in an upcoming issue. As for Dune style games, keep your eyes peeled for a game called Magic: The Gathering from Acclaim and another called Warhammer: Shadow of the Horned Rat from Mindscape. Alas, still no word on any plans for releasing Command & Conquer or Dune for the PlayStation.

Dear PSExtreme,

First, I want to congratulate you guys, for the best PlayStation mag on Earth. But lets get to the point. I have some questions that I would like to get some answers to. You guys are the experts, so I'll let you take a shot at them first. Well, here it goes.

- 1) First, what does it take for a letter to get published in PSExtreme? I've written about 10 letters, and never got so much as a word published.
- 2) On the back side of the PlayStation there are two mystery ports. One is labeled "Parallel I/O" and the other is labeled "Serial I/O". What the heck are these for?
- 3) In your October issue you said that the older PlayStations overheat. By what do you consider old? I bought my PlayStation in November 1995. Should I try to trade it for a new one?

- 4) On the side of the PlayStation box, there is an accessory called the Analog Joystick. I haven't seen it in stores. Does it actually exist?
- 5) And finally, in a back issue someone asked if there was going to be a protective box to collect and store issues. Well, are plans in progress to make this, or has that idea been thrown out the window?

Thanks for the info.
Chris Cope
Brooklyn Park, MN

1) In order for a letter to be published in PSExtreme, it must start by saying that we're the best PlayStation magazine on Earth. Nooo, not really, they all say that anyway. Many people seem to write in asking similar questions, so we choose the letters that best cover the biggest topics on people's minds at the time. We'll also publish the letter if it's just so funny we need to share it with everyone.

2) Those ports basically have the same functions as they do on a home computer. Specifically, on the PlayStation, the Serial I/O port is used for the link-up cable, to play head-to-head games against a friend with another PlayStation and another TV. It could also be used for a modem, if one was ever to be made. The Parallel I/O port is currently being used with the GameShark, an add-on cheating device available from Interact Accessories.

3) All PlayStations must be kept cool, or symptoms like music skipping, choppy FMV and longer load times can be seen. If you experience these things, make sure your PlayStation is well ventilated. Don't try to return your unit unless you've done everything you can to cool it down and it still has problems.

4) Yep, it's out now.

5) Plans haven't exactly been thrown out the window, they've been put on the back burner because Mark, our Marketing Director, has been shanghaied to take phone orders for the big Crash/Subscription offer (much to his chagrin.)

Dear PSExtreme,

My compliments to you, you have some pretty good reviews except for "D", I thought that was more of a Silver game. Anyways, I need to know Sony Computer Entertainment's address in Japan. I have a few ideas they might like. And my town has places where you can rent and buy PS games, but they haven't gotten a new game in five months. So I don't get to try any new titles. Oh well. And could you give me a few previews on PS's Nascar Racing, I've got the PC version but I want to see if the PS's version looks any better

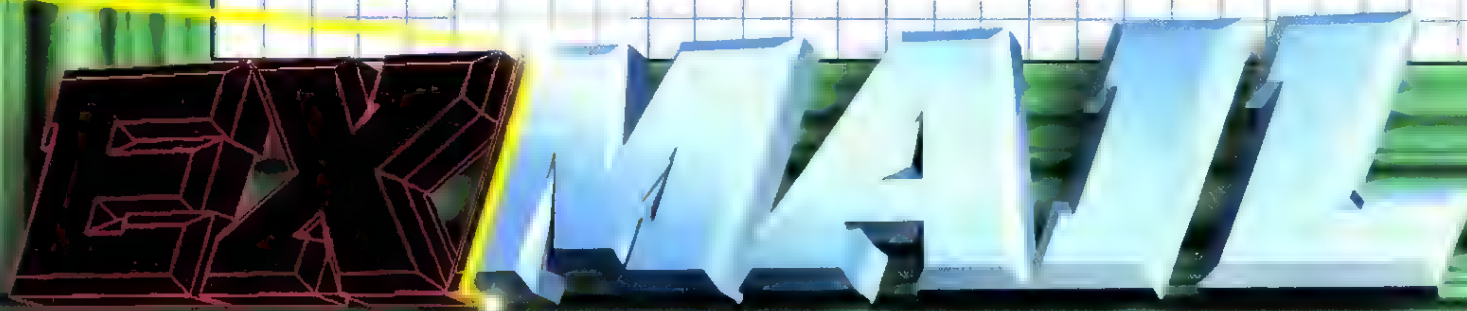
Thanks for your time.
Mike Burchett
Keokuk, IA

Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc.
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Bring that rental place a new issue of PSExtreme and tell them to order all the Gold games.
Check out the Nascar review this issue!

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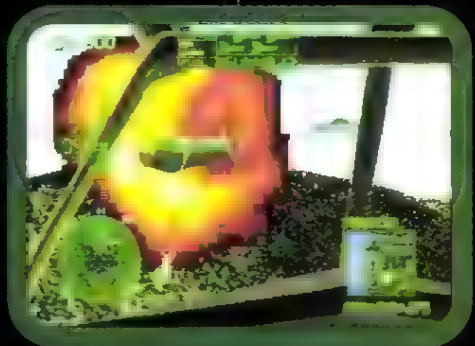
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BLACK DAWN. ARCADE COMBAT SO EXTREME, YOU'LL NEVER GO BACK TO ORDINARY CARNAGE.

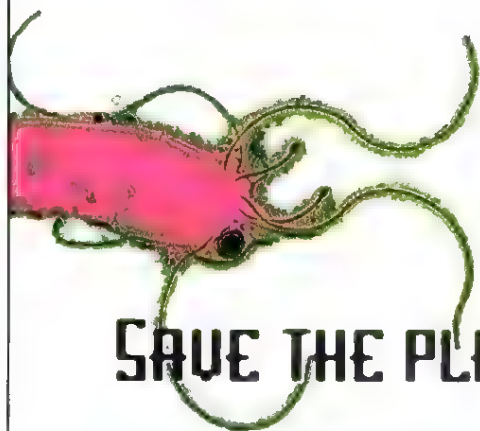
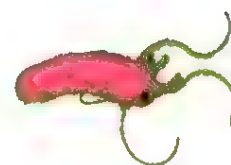
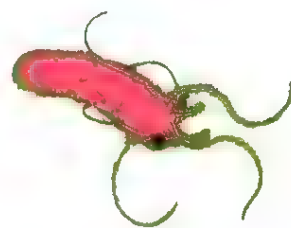
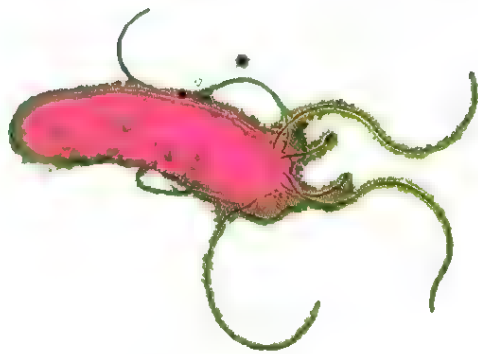


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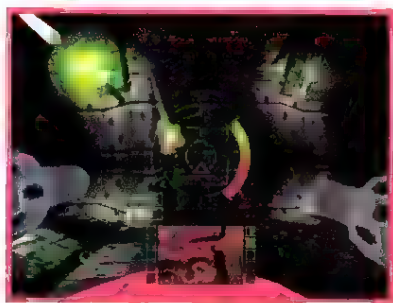
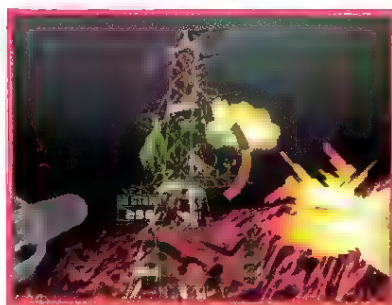
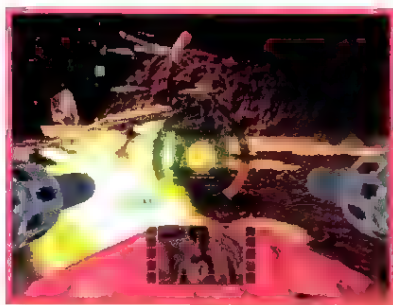


BLACK DAWN





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OUT LEAVING THE COMFORT OF YOUR BOMB.



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**MACHINE
HEAD**

PlayStation Gaming News

From Around The Globe

SONY MAKES PLAYSTATION PIRATES WALK THE PLANK

Software piracy — once a problem almost exclusively in the realm of computer gaming — has recently invaded the video game industry, as Asian countries with nonexistent copyright laws mass-produce bootleg video game CDs and sell them to shady American retailers. Well, Sony's mad as hell, and they're not going to take it anymore: On October 11th, Sony filed lawsuits against several retailers in the U.S. and Canada that were selling counterfeit and gray-market PlayStation software. One of the lawsuits also concerns various versions of a device that, when plugged into the PlayStation, allows it to play counterfeit and gray-market games.



This little "Chip" is part of what's giving Sony such fits.

Riley Russell, the director of legal and business affairs for Sony Computer Entertainment, had this to "say" in Sony's press release: "On behalf of the

consumers that purchase the PlayStation and its games, we will go to any length to protect the integrity of our products. We hope this suit sends a clear message that Sony will not tolerate illegal actions as they relate to our products and that we will vigorously prosecute all infringements to the greatest extent of the law."

Russell also mentions the distinctive black back of real PlayStation games: "Sony Computer Entertainment has developed a unique process to color the disc black. If a consumer has a question about the legitimacy of a game, they should flip the disc over and look for the black back."



A Hong Kong pirate version of Capcom's *Street Fighter: The Movie*. Note the missing black backside.

A quick check of the rec.games.video.sony newsgroup — where counterfeit PlayStation games are regularly bought, sold and traded (and usually referred to as "HKs") — shows a surprising bitterness at Sony for their actions. A cross-section of comments:

"This whole suing of NCS thing makes me sick to my stomach! After this I might just buy imports as a peaceful protest. The Sony that would do something like this isn't worthy

of my money. And the delays in games. Sheesh. I order from NCS all the time. If they are hurt in any way from all this I will refuse to buy another US PSX game. And I wouldn't mind getting an HK of that game I missed. I am mad as hell about all this crap. Sony, you went too far and I hope you pay for it. P.S. Import freedom forever!"

"HKs aren't going anywhere. Sony has no legal power in Taiwan. They can't do anything in Hong Kong to stop the pirating there...People will still be able to import the bootlegs for their own use. Sony's recent lawsuit might just discourage the reselling of HKs in the US and Canada, and even that is doubtful. It'll be awhile before the lawsuit is done, and I wouldn't be surprised if Sony drops it or settles out of court before then."

"I kinda feel that the suit against the chip distributors is probably an attempt to force them to settle out of court, and stop distributing, or face monstrous legal fees in an attempt to defend themselves. I've been on both sides of that ball, and it works...The chip itself is a PIC chip, a small micro that watches for the PSX to try to read the boot info from a CD, and then jams the appropriate data into the system; it's not a simple ROM...Some of the data that the PIC chip has may be copyrighted by Sony, but that's about the only thing I can see they could dig up, other than suing on intent or something like that."

Peter Mui (the owner of National

EX NEWS

Area 51 does not exist.

And if you're smart, you'll stop asking questions.

This is not a game. This is a warning.

AREA 51

you can't get it, but you can take it home.

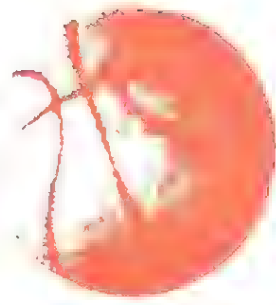
MIDWAY

The #1 Arcade game shows you what your government won't.



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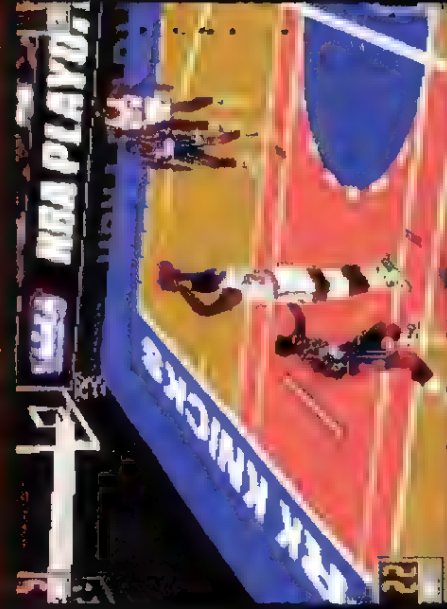




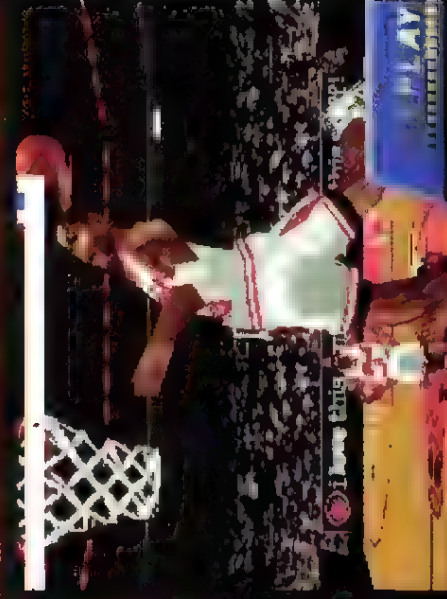
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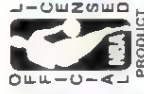
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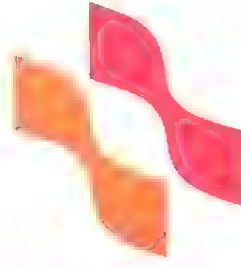


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PlayStation Gaming News

From Around The Globe

Console, one of the companies named in the lawsuits): "My company does not deal in what have become known as HK CDs and our business lies in the importation of Japanese video game software and hardware. We are able to source product directly from Japan which we distribute within the U.S and to Europe. This is our business and we offer our resellers and direct customers a diverse product line-up of original software...HK CDs have hurt my business and the business of the stores that we supply. We're in a tough market and HK CDs only add to the obstacles that we have to overcome in this competitive market...We do provide a service for the PlayStation where we add a decoder to the system printed circuit board. This allows the PlayStation to run the import games that we sell. We also provide a similar service for the Sega Saturn and we offer products that will allow Super Nintendo systems to run [Japanese] Super Famicom games and Genesis systems to run [Japanese] Mega Drive games...I suppose we can await similar actions by these companies for modifying their systems."

PlayStation piracy has even infiltrated the ranks of video game companies, where there's an unavoidable level of access to games in progress; an early beta version of Crash Bandicoot was making the rounds for weeks before the final product shipped, and Capcom Entertainment was

stung when a prerelease version of their 3D fighting game Star Gladiator was pirated and distributed. With the increased threat of theft, game companies are taking steps to make sure that, at the very least, early versions of their products don't find their way to Asia. Psygnosis has come up with the most ingenious method of piracy protection yet: each CD they send out to game journalists is encoded with the name of the person to whom it was sent, and the CD can't run without a special memory card (the contents of which can't be copied) inserted in the PlayStation.



Look, it's Greg's own personal Formula 1. This is Psygnosis' way of helping to combat piracy.

If you find counterfeit games at a local retailer, call Sony's hotline at 800-345-SONY and report the joint. Bootleg CDs don't just hurt Sony — they hurt game companies, programmers, retailers, and you.

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS AND ELECTRONIC ARTS INK DISTRIBUTION DEAL

Menlo Park, California based software publisher, Crystal Dynamics, has partnered with Electronic Arts to deliver their much-anticipated action/platform game, Pandemonium, to retail. Under the terms of the agreement, Electronic Arts will be responsible for sales and distribution of the game, while Crystal Dynamics will publish and market the title under their own label. This is the second such announcement from Crystal in as many months, having cut a deal with Activision for sales and distribution of their Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain game. What's next from the good folks at CD? Well, they have their very cool, arcade baseball game, 3D Baseball, coming to PlayStation and there are some rumblings about a certain well-known gecko going 3D ... we'll keep you posted.



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SIERRA

For more information, see your local software dealer or visit us at <http://www.sierra.com>.



SEND US YOUR CODES AND WIN BIG PRIZES!

Each month we'll pick the best code sent in by our loyal and intelligent readers and send that new RPG for the PlayStation, King's Field II.

Doing a good thing, ASCII's SpecializedStick (you can't get it anywhere else) is a lot of cool stuff for just a code; what are you waiting for?

WE HAVE A WINNER!

Winner: [Name] and [Address] go to the [Prize]. codes before anyone else! Thanks bud! Your King's Field II and other goodies are on the way!

NCAA Gamebreaker



ON THE PASSWORD SCREEN

On the screen where you choose type of game mode, options, memory card, etc, tap: L1, R1, L2, R2. You should come to the screen called "Easter Egg." At this screen, you enter the passwords which are found vertically on the left side of the screen after every game when you're going through Bowl or tournament Season. Keep in mind to use Capital Letters where shown.

1) Midgets; 2) Giants; 3) Little Arm; 4) Big Arm; 5) Healthy; 6) Injuries Up; 7) Blocking Up; 8) Copper; 9) Gold; 10) Silver; 11) Big GB; 12) Hands; 13) Interceptions; 14) Rock Em; 15) Flash; 16) EMU All Stars; 17) OSU All Stars; 18) Fumbles; 19) Credits; 20) USC All Stars; 21) Mich All Stars; 22) Neb All Stars; 23) ND All Stars; 24) Tackles.

Also if you put player 2 on Ohio State University & go to "Roster" & put it on Ohio State, then return to the "Team Select Screen" the player 2 side will have the Ohio State All-Stars which is totally different than Ohio State.

CONTEST RULES: Anyone or any age can enter. The only people not eligible to win are employees of Dimension Publishing or ASCII Entertainment, their friends, family, pets and anyone they talk to or know of. Dimension Publishing reserves the right to make any and all decisions regarding the contest. One winner per month will be chosen, at Dimension Publishing's discretion, based on the code or trick supplied by the entrant. If you win but do not specify, in your code submission, which prize you want to receive (King's Field or an ASCII Specialized Stick), then we will choose for you.

Formula 1



All of these cheats should be entered at the RACE QUALIFY screen.

BIKE MODE: Hold SELECT and quickly press ↓, ↑, O, Δ, →, ↑, O, Δ. The message BIKE MODE ACTIVATED appears, and you race as a small bicycle. "I want to ride my bicycle, I want to ride my bike..." (A rare reference to a Queen song instead of my usual KISS reference.)

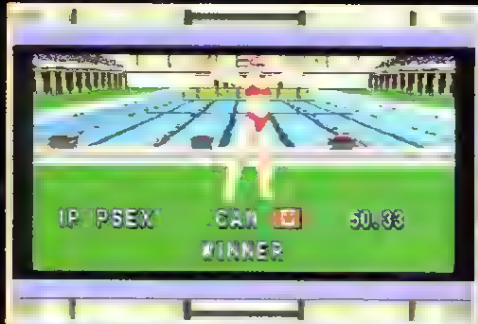
BONUS TRACK: Finish at the top of an Arcade or Grand Prix championship and you reveal a new car-shaped track named Frameout City. (Save your game to a memory card so the track is always selectable.) You can also activate the bonus track by using a cheat: Hold SELECT and quickly press ←, O, O, Δ, Δ, O, ↑, →. The message BONUS TRACK ACTIVATED appears.

BUGGY MODE: Hold SELECT and quickly press →, ↑, Δ, ←, ↑, □, Δ. The message BUGGY MODE ACTIVATED appears, and you get to race with a cute little buggy.

GIBBERISH MODE: Hold SELECT and quickly press ←, O, ↑, ↓, ↓, →, O, □, □. The message GIBBERISH MODE ACTIVATED appears, and during a race, that's what comes out of the announcer's mouth.

LAVA MODE: Hold SELECT and quickly press □, O, ↑, →, →, O, X. The message LAVA MODE ACTIVATED appears, and the tracks turn into volcanic versions of themselves.

Int'l Track & Field



ADJUST POWER METERS: Pause the game and hold L1, L2, R1, R2, □, X, Δ, and O. Now press ↑ or ↓ to move the meters.

BIKINI-CLAD SWIMMERS: Highlight the 100M Free Style event and press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ←.

•, O, X. During the event, the swimmers wear bikinis instead of their normal one-piece suits. **SECRET SIGHTS:** Here's how to spot cool graphics in five of the events.

- **DISCUS/HAMMER:** Throw the discus a distance where the first two and last two numbers match (34.34 meters, for example). Pretty birds appear in the discus, and a balloon appears in the hammer.
- **HIGH JUMP:** Jump the minimum height of the first attempt, then make a second jump of at least 0.40 meters higher. A blimp appears during the third jump. If you clear 2.70 meters, you can adjust the bar up to 3.70 meters.
- **JAVELIN:** Throw at maximum power and more than 60 degrees to spear a UFO.
- **LONG JUMP/TRIPLE JUMP:** Jump a distance where the last three numbers match (14.44 meters, for example). Lookit the cute mole!
- **POLE VAULT:** Clear the qualifying height of 4.50 meters, then clear at least 4.90 meters on the second attempt. The space shuttle flies past during the height setting. If you clear 6.60 meters, you can adjust the bar up to 8.60 meters.
- **SHOT PUT:** Throw a distance where all the numbers match (22.22 meters, for example) and a dinosaur appears behind the crowd.

Time Commando

WEAKEN THE VIRUS: Enter the code Δ, Δ, □, O, X, Δ, O, □, □, □, X and watch the virus go from the strength of Ah-hold to the strength of, uh, Zach Meston. (I think Kate Moss has bigger biceps than he does.)

EASY LEVEL PASSWORDS: Level 1: MKJYMWGE; Level 2: GBPMXZFX; Level 3: KBEWNNCA; Level 4: MKBWTQBQ; Level 5: OJJNOOFR.

Alone in the Dark

Walkthrough Part 1: Outside Hell's Kitchen

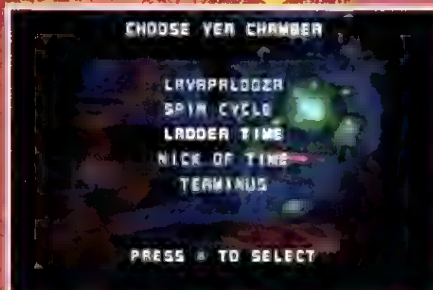
- **ENTRY INTO HELL'S KITCHEN:** After the gate-busting explosion, defeat the gangster as he gets up from the ground. He drops a Thompson, loading-clip, and flask for you to pick up. Use the loading-clip on the Thompson and drink the flask for ten health points. Head up the walkway toward the house, staying on the right side of the path. When you reach the two statues and the anchor, push the anchor to give yourself room to run into the Garden. Make it quick or you start getting plugged by the gangsters.
- **THE GARDEN:** Run down the path, staying in the long passage through which you entered the hedge. Take the second left, then the first right, to find an area with four large playing cards in the ground. Take the hook near the cards, then walk onto the red diamond to drop into The Underground.
- **THE UNDERGROUND:** Turn to the right and punch the heavyset thug. Push the chest forward and take the metallic Jack of diamonds. An altar appears at the end of the passage. Walk up to the altar—picking up the torn notebook along the way—and use the metallic Jack to





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Blast Chamber Mini Strategies



• **CORNERBLITZ:** Keep grabbing the Paralyzer power-up in this chamber. It freezes far away opponents with the crystal; it keeps other players from grabbing a free crystal. It lets you stuff the crystal into the reactor without hassle.

• **HANG TIME:** You can use two strategies in this chamber. Strategy #1: Stand in whichever reactor is face-up (it doesn't matter if you have the crystal). Wait for other players to jump up to the reactor and push them before they land. If it's properly timed, you can shove them into the spikes for an easy kill. You can score more kills this way than you would by stuffing the crystal into your enemies' reactors. Strategy #2: Keep using the launchers to reach the kickers in the front and back of the chamber and keep spinning the sucker until you're about to hurt.

• **LAUNCHACROSS:** Use the launchers to jump to whichever cross the crystal is on. If an opponent tries jumping onto your cross, push him to the ground. If he tries jumping onto the other cross to spin the chamber, use the kickers on your cross to spin it first. As long as you have the crystal, your opponents' kill clocks keep winding down while yours stays frozen. When you're ready to end the madness, jump toward the center of the cube and land on the reactor.

• **PITFALL:** Whenever an opponent gets close to a pit, shove or spin that twit right in. One evil tactic is to wait until an opponent is running toward the crystal or away from a pit, then take the Pay-Bomb power-up to reverse his controls.

SELECT ANY CHAMBER: Select the **SOLO SURVIVOR** mode from the **GAMES** option, then (with all the options on-screen) press **←**, **→**, **↓**, **↑**. You'll hear a slightly goopy sound-effect. Now highlight the **CHAMBERS** option, hold **L1** and **L2**, and press **→**. You can now play any of the 40 one-player chambers by pressing **→** (to select it) and **START**. There are two catches: you don't get passwords, and you won't get high scores.

open a trap door. Turn around to fight the ghost figure with your fists or your Thompson. The ghost leaves behind a pirate sword. Run to the ladder at the opposite end of the passage, take the flask at the foot of the ladder, and drink it. Climb up the ladder into The Garden.

• **THE GARDEN:** Grab the rope at the top of the ladder, then walk backward and drop back into the Underground before the gangster starts shooting. Walk forward and turn right. Climb the ladder to the four cards and run in the direction of the red heart. Take the first left and follow the path until you can make another left. Take the left turn and follow the path past a husky gangster to reach two huge vines. Use the pirate sword and swing it to kill the vines (but don't get too close, or the vines hit you back). *Run forward to the statue of One-Eyed Jack and turn left to pick up the flask in the corner. Stand here and use your Thompson to kill the peg-leg gangster. Use the hook in your inventory to create a hook and rope. Walk up to the statue and use the hook and rope to pull down the statue's arm and open a secret passage. Pick up the page from a newspaper before you enter the passage. All this may sound easy, but you're heavily outnumbered and outgunned, so you'll be lucky to make it into the passage with ten health points left. Your reward is a long and goofy full-motion video sequence.

• **BENEATH THE STATUE:** You'll fall off the ladder and lose all your weapons, but you won't be hurt. Pick up the nickel on the ground, the crank on the wooden bridge, and the paper bag on the other side. Keep walking ahead to find the body of Ted Striker. Search his body to find a torn notebook and a pipe cleaner. (For a bit of sick fun, push Striker's body off the ledge.) *Use either torn notebook in your inventory and read the newly created detective's notebook. Walk up to the locked door. Use the page to push it underneath the door. Use the pipe cleaner to push the key through the keyhole and make it land on the page. Use the key to unlock the door and go through.

• **STOREROOM:** Use the paper bag to breathe into it. Run forward and stand on the left side of the lever. Use the paper bag again to pop it and get the thug's attention. Quickly push the lever to drop the barrel into the thug and knock him into the ocean, through the same door you get dumped out of whenever you die (which is much, much too frequently). Pick up the flask, manuscript, and riot gun he leaves behind. *Walk behind the clock to find a hole. Use the crank on the clock to open up a secret passage near the barrels. Walk to the passage and pick up the book, then enter the passage. Pick up the cartridges and use them to load the riot gun. Go into the elevator to ride up to Hell's Kitchen.

Part 2: Inside Hell's Kitchen

• **BASEMENT:** Go into your inventory and tear the Music Man's Pact to kill the accordion-toting enemy, who leaves behind a hook. Take it and walk through the white door into the Laundry

Room.

• **LAUNDRY ROOM:** Pick up the battledore in the corner and go through the door into the Shooting Gallery.

• **SHOOTING GALLERY:** Use the battledore to defeat the two thugs. (Hit the green thug first, since he only needs one hit to be killed.) When both thugs are dead, pick up the cartridges and use them to load up the riot gun. Use the gun to shoot the four targets against the far wall and rotate them to diamonds. (You can also punch the targets to rotate them and save ammo.) A secret passage opens up with a guard inside. Use the battledore to defeat him and go through the door into the Distillery.

• **DISTILLERY:** Walk up to the shelves and take the bottle of whisky and flask. Drink the flask and search around the barrels at the end of the room to find two books. Use the nickel in the slot machine on the wall to win two tokens. Go back into the Shooting Gallery.

• **SHOOTING GALLERY:** Walk up to the strange creature and put the bottle of whisky on the ground. After the creature drinks it and dies—hmmm, maybe it was Zima in that bottle—pick up the sack and open it to find the Santa Claus suit. Use the suit to put it on and go up the stairs in the Laundry Room.

• **GROUND FLOOR HALLWAY:** Wait for the tiny chef to walk up the stairs and back down again. Go to the Kitchen door and walk onto the orange square next to the door to trigger the statue. Be sure to block the doorway so that the chef can't get past you. The statue of Neptune throws its trident at you, but whacks the chef instead. Walk up to the statue and take the crown, then go into the Kitchen.

• **KITCHEN:** Take the plate of fried eggs and the frying pan from the table. Eat the plate of eggs (which should reduce your health, but instead boosts it) and use the frying pan. Attack the chef before he starts blowing darts at you. (You can block the darts with the pan.) Grab the bottle of wine and search the right side of the dumbwaiter (with the wine bottles on it) to find poison. Use the poison to make a bottle of poisoned wine. Leave the Kitchen and stand in front of the double doors next to the Kitchen door.

• **GUARD ROOM:** Drop the poisoned wine in front of the door and the guards take it. Meanwhile, the creature whose Santa suit you stole appears and starts shooting at you. Merry friggin' Christmas to you, too. Use the frying pan or a non-stop barrage of quick punches to take him out. (I found it helpful to hide in the doorway of the Kitchen and slug him as he tried to walk in; this technique also works well at several other places in the game.) *Walk up to the barrel organ in the Guard Room and use the yellow token to make a doubloon appear on the floor. It's hard to see, so peek at the screen shot for its precise location. Pick up the doubloon and use the brown token in the barrel organ to open the door leading into the Dormitory.

EXCLUSIVE

ROBOTRON X



**If You Lose,
They Die!**

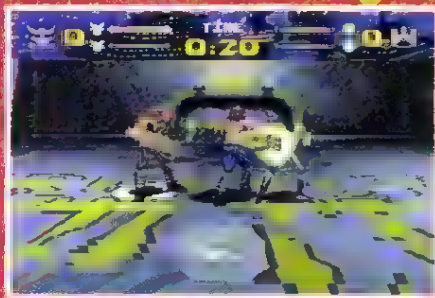
MIDWAY

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Pitball Mini Strategies



GAMEPLAY TIPS

- Choose Jazz and Funk as your first Pitball team; they're a good combination of speed and strength. The rule of thumb is: the bigger the players, the slower and stronger they are.
- Remember that shooting the ball (by pressing R2) also makes it a weapon of sorts, which you can use to knock out your opponents.
- The jumping attack move (press X three times) is the easiest to use and one of the most effective. Try it. You like it.
- You can steer the ball for a few seconds after shooting it; this nifty effect, also found in just about every soccer game on the planet, is called aftertouch. Use it to make shots from weird angles (you can score from anywhere in the pit).
- If you make a shot where you rebound the ball off the wall, you score two points instead of one. For starters, try shooting at an angle from the face-off O in the middle of the pit.
- Use a special move at the face-off to knock the PI-

- Buy the anti-gravity boots before every match on a low-gravity world to overcome the low friction.
- Leg energy is the most important stat in the game (strong legs equals fast running), so keep buying energy boots for your hard-working employees.
- Don't take out long-term loans, 'cause the interest will kill you. (A tip that applies equally well to Pitball and buying a house.)
- If you plan to bribe teams, you unskilled brute, wait until near the end of the season, when it's clearer

bringing fresh flesh onto your team.

FMV TEST AND HIDDEN GAME: Go to the OPTIONS

screen. The FMV Test and Hidden Game options aren't active until you beat the game, but we're gonna work around that slightly lengthy process: press **←**, **→**, **□**, **○** to activate the option. Press **X**, choose a character, and press **X** again to view the clip. (You can also see all these clips if you let the game sit there and kick into demo mode.) Now, here's the really cool part: When a character's name is highlighted, press **□** and **○** at the same time to access a hidden game. In this neat little shooter, you have two minutes to blast as many polygonal asteroids as you can; press **X** to shoot and use the control pad to maneuver the ship. (The controls are like an airplane, so pressing **↑** makes you dive, and pressing **↓** makes you climb.) When time runs out, your score is displayed. There's a different ship for each character (12 in all).

- **DORMITORY:** Take the bullet-proof vest on the bed, the loading-clip, and the Thompson. Load up the Thompson and put on the vest. Walk back to the Ground Floor Hallway and go up the stairs to the First Floor Hallway.
- **FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY:** Shoot the gangster in the hallway and go through the door into the Main Hall, then into the Billiards Room.
- **BILLIARDS ROOM:** As you enter the room, the gangster throws a derringer onto the pool table. How sporting (and stupid) of him! Take the derringer and use it to shoot him. (If you run out of ammo, switch to the Thompson until it jams, then the riot gun.) Pick up the sword-stick the gangster leaves behind and search the bookshelves at the end of the room to find a piece of parchment and a book.
- **FIRST FLOOR BEDROOM:** Walk into the corner of the bedroom and use the sword-stick to battle the arms in the wall. (The best technique is to press Up and A to thrust, then back up out of range. Thrust and retreat until both arms are dead.) Once they're defeated, pick up the piece of parchment. Use either of the parchments in your inventory to create a single parchment. Walk to the white statue and use the crown to open a door into a secret chamber. Walk into the Chamber of Sorcery and pick up the amulet to float up to the Loft.
- **LOFT:** Take the flask and the message, then go through the door into the Attic Hallway.
- **ATTIC HALLWAY:** Go around the left corner and open the chest to find a Thompson and loading-clip. Load it up and defeat the two gangsters that enter the hallway. The big gangster leaves behind a key, and the skinny guy leaves behind a grenade and flask. Walk into the Attic Junk Room.
- **ATTIC JUNK ROOM:** Use the doubloon in the jack-in-the-box and pick up the pompon from the ground. Walk into the Attic Bedroom.
- **ATTIC BEDROOM:** Walk through the room to the Garden door. Throw the pompon out the door and the evil puppet runs outside to fetch it. While the puppet goes for the pompon and the snakes are going for the puppet, go into the Garden and face the chimney. Use the grenade in the chimney, then climb down into the Dining Room.
- **DINING ROOM:** There would be three gangsters in this room, but since you used the grande, there's only one. You can fight him or avoid him, your choice. (We took the non-macho approach.) Walk up to the Christmas tree and take the billiard ball. Return upstairs to the Billiards Room and use the billiard ball in the Chinese billiard table (the thingmabob with poles and holes) to reveal a locked door. Use the key to unlock the door and go through into Jack's Secret Room.
- **JACK'S SECRET ROOM:** After Jack leaves, use the hook to open the door. Run down the stairs and go through the front door across from the stairs, where you're caught by Jack's evil mistress.
- **ENTRY INTO JACK'S KITCHEN:** Now you're in

control of cute little Grace, who's absolutely defenseless and must avoid the bad guys to stay alive. Walk to the trunk of the car and a gangster comes outside. Climb into the trunk and take the billiard ball. The gangster drives through the gate into a grassy area. *You automatically crawl out of the trunk. Immediately turn to face the golden hook to the north and walk straight to the hook. Do not stray from the path or you'll draw the attention of the gangsters and get caught. As soon as you pick up the hook, walk a straight line backwards to the car. If you get through this without getting caught, the rest is easy. *Walk around the left side of the car and straight out to the pole near the tree with the hole. Use the billiard ball next to the pole and a statue appear next to the tree. Walk to the statue and use the hook. A pirate appears and hauls you down to the Galleon.

Part 3: The Galleon

- **PRISON ROOM:** Push the smaller of the two doors out of the way and go into the Guard Room.
- **GUARD ROOM:** Take the bag of seeds on the floor and feed it to the parrot for a clue. Pick up the sandwich and pepperpot from the table. Scarf the sandwich and walk to the map on the wall to examine it. Run through the door into the Second Level Corridor.
- **SECOND LEVEL CORRIDOR:** Turn left to run down the corridor and then turn right to hide under the stairs. Once the guard walks past you, quickly dart out from the stairs and climb the ladder at the end of the corridor. Climb the second ladder to the Ship's Deck.
- **SHIP'S DECK:** Slowly walk from hiding place to hiding place to avoid being noticed by the partying sailors. Hide behind the barrels and boxes that you see at the bottom of the screen when you first climb out onto the Deck. If you try to hide behind the other items, you'll get caught. (Notice that the dancing pirate won't notice you even when he's literally right next to you; it's the accordion player you need to fear.) Grab the tinder-box before you climb down the hatch into Jack's Cabin.
- **JACK'S CABIN:** Take the captain's staff from underneath the bed. Open the small chest and take the small cannon. Put the cannon in front of the door to the outside corridor. Use the pepperpot and fill up the cannon with it. Now grab the crystal vase from the bookshelf and throw it to get the attention of the pirate in the corridor. When he opens the door, use the tinder-box to set off the cannon and quite effectively kill him with a fatal sneezing fit. Pick up the bell he drops, turn left, and go into the Ship's Galley.
- **SHIP'S GALLEY:** Pick up the chicken's foot and walk to the dumbwaiter (the blue panel). Ring the bell to climb into the dumbwaiter and ride down to the Kitchen.
- **KITCHEN:** Pick up the key on the floor and use it to unlock the blue cabinet. Take the pot of molasses and the icebox. Use the icebox on the ground to scatter some ice cubes and walk over

An alien conspiracy

A bizarre
and brutal dimension

A deadly trap with only one
chance for survival...

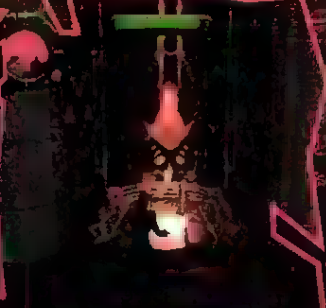
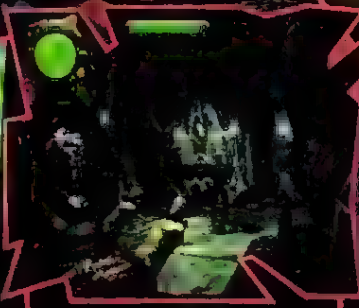
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Perfect Weapon may very well end up as one of the most unique and exciting products to hit the PlayStation this year!"
Greg Off, Editor-in-Chief, PS Extreme

"I have reviewed over 1,000 games and have never seen anything like Perfect Weapon."
Lawrence Neves, Senior Editor Game Pro

"...one of the first true 3D fighting games."
Next Generation

A new dimension in gaming...

Camera angles move as fast as you do.



head games



<http://www.ascgames.com>



WINDOWS® 95

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GAME SHARK

Codez

Welcome to the Game Shark section. From month we'll list the newest and coolest codes right here for your cheat's pleasure. Be warned: These codes won't work if you don't own a Game Shark, so don't be calling us and complaining that they don't work when you try to enter them in your password screen!!

BEYOND THE BEYOND

No Random Encounters	#01FFE02	0000
Unlimited Cash	#0103884	FFFF
Finn Attack	#01149D8	00FF
Finn Defence	#01149DC	00FF
Finn Speed	#01149E0	00FF
Finn Unlimited HP	#01149D4	03E7
Finn Unlimited MP	#01149D0	03E7
Finn Experience	#01149D4	FFFF
Set Finn's last item to XXXX	#0114A04	XXXX
Source of Courage		0034
Dragon Blade		003C
Ring of Death		003E
Black Box		003A
Light Box		010F
Annie Attack	#0114A60	00FF
Annie Defence	#0114A64	00FF
Annie Speed	#0114A68	00FF
Annie Unlimited HP	#0114A5C	03E7
Annie Unlimited MP	#0114A58	03E7
Annie Experience	#0114A78	FFFF
Edward Attack	#0114B70	00FF
Edward Defence	#0114B74	00FF
Edward Speed	#0114B78	00FF
Edward Unlimited HP	#0114B6C	03E7
Edward Unlimited MP	#0114B68	03E7
Edward Experience	#0114B88	FFFF
Edward Attack	#0114B78	00FF
Edward Defence	#0114B7C	00FF
Edward Speed	#0114B80	00FF
Edward Unlimited HP	#0114B74	03E7
Edward Unlimited MP	#0114B70	03E7
Edward Experience	#0114C10	FFFF
Tont Attack	#0114C80	00FF
Tont Defence	#0114C84	00FF
Tont Speed	#0114C88	00FF
Percy Unlimited HP	#0114A24	03E7
Percy Unlimited MP	#0114A20	03E7
Percy Experience	#0114B00	FFFF

MURBLE BOBBLE

Infinite Lives Player 1	#0176AC8	0005
	#0176ACC	0100
	#0176AE0	0000
Infinite Lives Player 2	#0176A98	0003
	#0176A9C	0100
	#0176AB0	0000
Infinite Credits	#0176B30	0009
P1 Special of the Bobble	#0176ACE	0129
P1 in Fire	#0176ACE	011F
P2 Special of the Bobble	#0176A9E	0129
P2 in Fire	#0176A9E	011F

Rainbow Islands

Infinite Lives Player 1	#005DC3A	0003
Infinite Credits	#005D3E6	0009
TIME COMMANDO		
Infinite Life	#0097982	0020

to the door until the gangster notices you. Run behind the ice cubes and the gangster falls as he comes after you. Leave the Kitchen and go up the stairs to the First Floor Hallway.

- **FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY:** Use the pot of molasses to spill it onto the floor and hide behind it. The guard that comes after you gets very stuck. Walk into the Billiards Room.
- **BILLIARDS ROOM:** Take the token from the end of the pool table. Walk to Jack's desk and use the captain's staff to get the key to the irons. Take the key and walk to the First Floor Bedroom, then walk to the Chamber of Sorcery (where you found the amulet earlier). Use the Captain's staff on the flat stone to turn it into the Loa Staff. You appear in the Ground Floor Hallway. Walk to the Guard Room.
- **GUARD ROOM:** Place the teddy bear on the ground next to the bed in the wall (not the room with the five beds). Walk to the barrel organ and use the token. Run behind the teddy bear and the gangster very strangely gets stuck next to the bear. Walk to the Kitchen, ring the bell, and go down the dumbwaiter. You'll be caught and returned to the Prison Room.

Part 4: The Exciting Conclusion

- **PRISON ROOM:** Press and hold Right on the control pad to reach for the key. Take it and use it to unlock your shackles. Defeat the pirate and take his pirate sword. (We had the best success with the pirate sword by holding A and Right to thwack any pirate that got close.) Walk into the next room and defeat the pirate to get a Thompson and flask. Walk into the corridor and run left, then turn around and defeat the third pirate for a short fuse and a pirate pistol. (Not a good weapon at all. You're much better off sticking with the sword.) Open the door between the lanterns to walk into the Liquor Store.
- **LIQUOR STORE:** Use the sword to defeat the peg-leg pirate, who leaves behind ammunition, coat of mail, flask, and pirate pistol. Put on the mail and push the barrel to the right to grab a second coat. Exit the Store and go through the door on your right into the Ship's Hold.
- **SHIP'S HOLD:** Kill the pirate in the hold and take the ammunition and flask. Walk back into the corridor and defeat the pirate, then go through the door he was guarding into the Foundry.
- **FOUNDRY:** Use the sword to defeat the two blacksmiths. Search the furnace to find a poker and take the pliers from the workbench. Walk into the far corner of the Foundry to find a quite useful key. Walk into the corridor and use the key to unlock the locked door, then go through into the Powder Magazine.
- **POWDER MAGAZINE:** Kill the pirate and take the keg of powder and the opuscle. Leave the room and climb up the ladder to the First Level Corridor. Go through the unlocked door on one side of the corridor into the Cannon Room. Walk across the corridor and enter the Dormitory filled with sleeping pirates.
- **DORMITORY:** Put the keg of powder on the floor,

across from the cannon in the Cannon Room. Walk back into the Cannon Room and use the pliers to cut the chain holding the cannon in place. This wakes up the sleeping pirate, who attacks you quite aggressively. Defeat him to get ammunition. *Stand on the left side of the cannon and push it into place, pointing directly at the keg of powder. Use the short fuse on the cannon, then use the poker to light it and cause a big bang. Run into the burned-out Dormitory and take the pouch of gold coins and the flask from the end of the room. Go to the Ship's Galley.

- **SHIP'S GALLEY:** The door is locked, but don't fret. Use the pouch to shake it and lure the two tiny chefs out of the Galley. Use the sword to defeat them. Enter the Galley and take the flask from the shelves. Open the door into the Pantry and defeat the cook to get a metallic Jack of diamonds. Go to the locked door across from the Galley and use the metallic Jack to open it. Go inside and you're trapped by a powerful spell.
- **WITCH'S ROOM:** You're back in control of Grace, but not for long this time around. Walk to the statue and use the Loa Staff in its hand to open up a secret passage. Walk to the altar in front of the witch and use the chicken foot to destroy her with some wicked cool magic.
- **WITCH'S ROOM:** Once again, Edward Carnby is your alter ego. Run out of the room, turn right, and climb up to the Ship's Deck.
- **SHIP'S DECK:** Attack the Music Man and take the hook he leaves behind, then defeat the remaining pirates with the sword. Climb up the mast to the Lookout Post.
- **LOOKOUT POST:** Defeat the pirate by driving him off the ledge or just by whacking him a few times. Use the hook while standing near the ladder (don't fall!) to slide down the rope to the Mizzenmast.
- **MIZZENMAST:** Defeat the pirate with the sword. Jump down to the Ship's Deck and take Captain Nichols' sword, which is stuck into the Deck.
- **SHIP'S DECK:** Cut through Grace's chains with the pliers and prepare for the climactic battle with One-Eyed Jack. I found the best tactic was to hide behind one of the chests on the ship and keep swinging Nichols' sword constantly (A and Right on the control pad) to whack Jack every time he got close. You may, of course, prefer your own strategy. However you do it, Jack needs to be killed twice, because he gets up and attacks again after his first "death." When Jack goes down for the second time, sit back and watch your hard-earned—and much too short—ending sequence.

Send all code submissions to:

EXECUTE

Dimension Publishing

1175 Chess Drive, Suite E

Foster City, CA 94404

or email us at: d3@quake.net

EXECUTE

Ten Pin Alley

The precise physics of your ball hitting the pins is so technically advanced and graphically dazzling, you'll be bowled over!

Lots of colorful characters, male and female, righty and lefty, each with their own unique styles.

Choose lane and alley designs: retro Maui Bowl, contemporary Ten Pin Alley or kill the lights at crazy late night Conga Bowl.

NO BOWLING SHOES REQUIRED

Sanctioned by



Bowling Hall of Fame and Museum
St. Louis, Mo.

Developed by



Windows® 95

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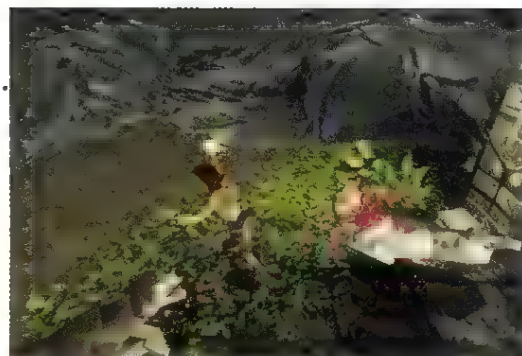
head games.



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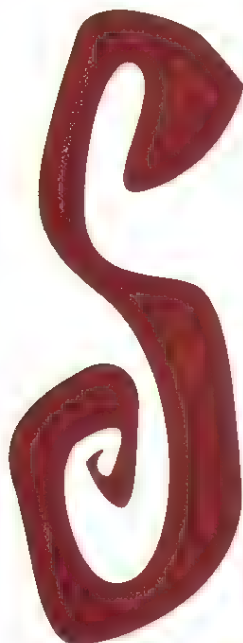
GOVERNMENT MAP
LIVE
LIVE
LIVE



THE AM
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N



THE AM
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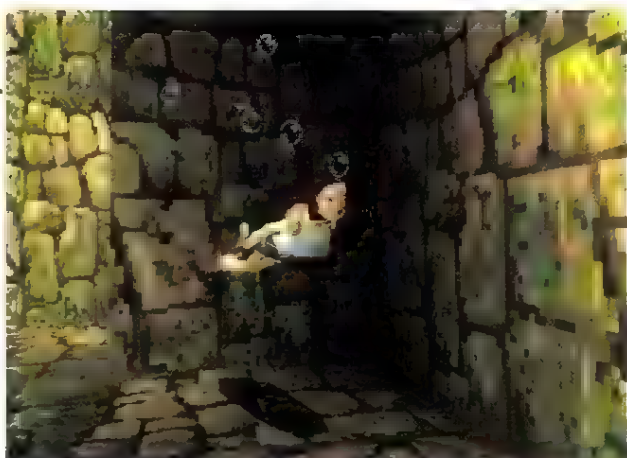
SOMETIMES, HAVING A



Sometimes, you also need guts. Or a brain. Or quick feet. Other times, you need all of the above plus grenades, a shotgun and a matching pair of nine millimeters. Such is your fate when you control Lara Croft, heroine heartthrob of Tomb Raider



EIDOS INTERACTIVE CORE TOMB RAIDER LARA CROFT
EIDOS P



NEVER
TWO
THREE



KILLER BODY

JUST ISN'T ENOUGH.

Lara has her sights on a few ancient artifacts, and she's not going to let anything or anybody get in her way. Alligators. Wolves. Thugs. They're all tempting fate once in Lara's path. But hey, what's a little temptation? Especially when everything looks this good. In the game, we mean. Check out Tomb Raider at www.DOMARK.com



EIDOS



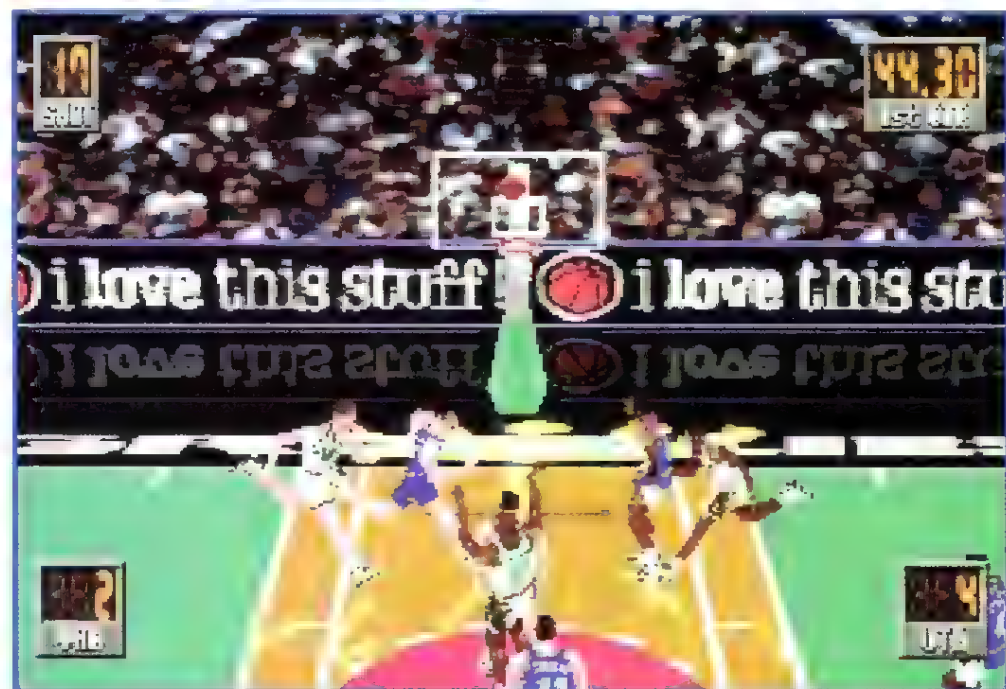
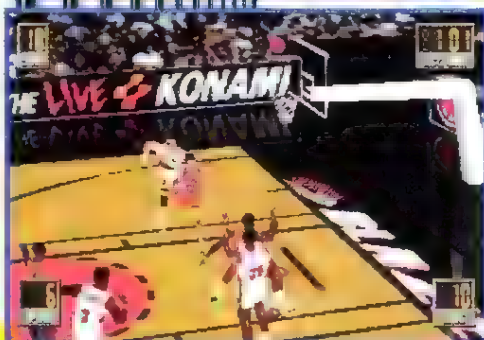
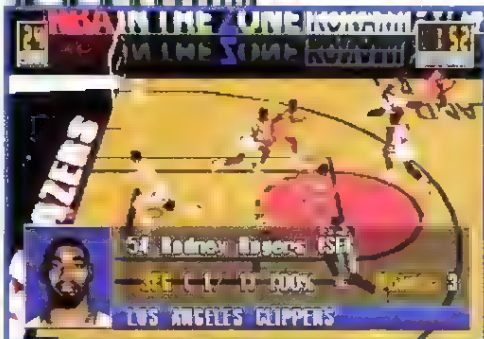
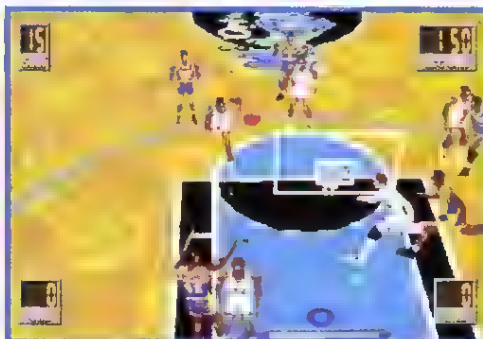
TOMB RAIDER



NBA IN THE ZONE 2

KONAMI • AVAILABLE DECEMBER

Wow! While Konami's NBA In the Zone was a good, first-generation, game of arcade hoop, they have gone back to the drawing board for In the Zone 2, and created what looks to be the best b'ball game on the PlayStation to date. In the Zone 2 is presented in the PS's high-resolution mode, with every NBA player's (with the exception of Jordan, Shaq and Barkley — who, for some baffling reason control their own names and likeness' and whose power seems to supersede that of the NBA Player's Association — total BS and very cheap on the part of three of the richest people in sports) name, number and face (and they look good!). The graphics are exceptional and the game offers both arcade and simulation features. The version of the game shown here is about 65% finished. We will review it in our January issue and you can look forward to seeing the game at retail in December. Without jumping the gun TOO much, basketball fans are not going to want to miss this one!



EXPECTING

Proof That Demons Do Exist

In the near future, mankind has conquered dimensional travel but the door we have opened swings both ways. The peaceful city you have grown up in has become a haven for dark creatures from another world— Demons! Now it's up to you and your friends to harness the hidden power within you by entering the fantasy game known as Persona.

You awaken with incredible abilities that you will need to defeat the scores of Demon invaders and cleanse the land of their forces. Converse with them before doing battle to determine your best course of action. Fight them or enlist their aid in your mission. Either way, you are set for the fantasy adventure of a lifetime!

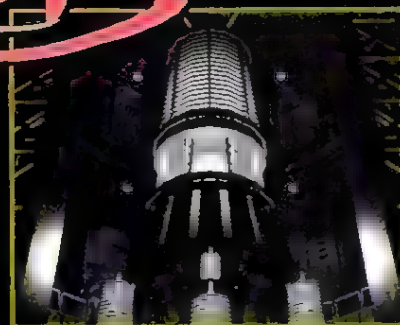
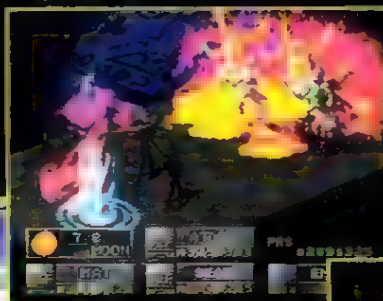
Special Features

- Based on the ultra-popular, mega-hit, Megami Tensei series: first time to hit US shores
- 100+ hours of pulse pounding gameplay
- Over 300 different monsters to do battle with
- Morph any member of your party into a more powerful source known as "Persona"
- Fight your way to one of many endings

Persona



Use your "Persona"

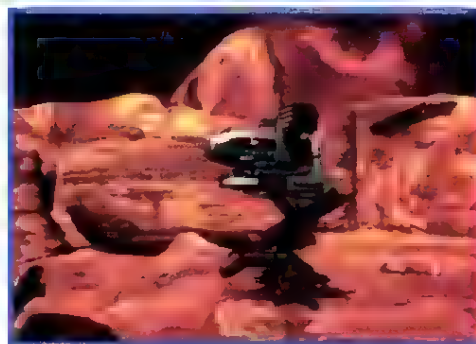
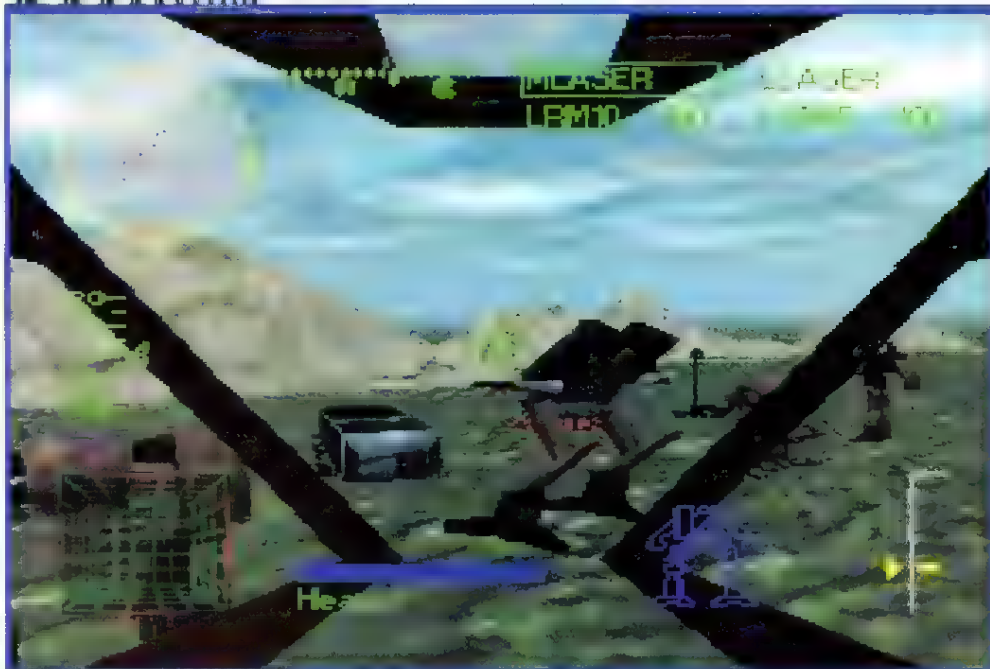


ATLUS



Persona™ is the first chapter of the
REVELATIONS



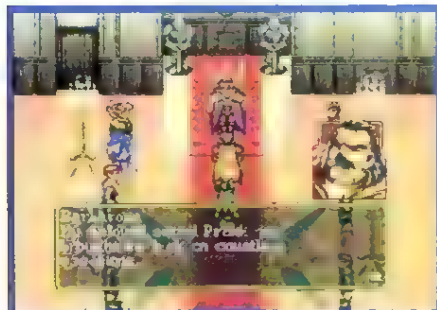
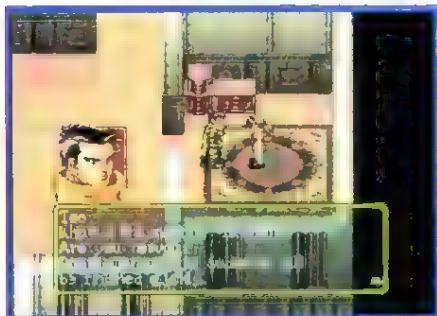


MECH WARRIOR 2

ACTIVISION • AVAILABLE JANUARY

Activision's hit PC title, MechWarrior 2, is coming to the PlayStation in January. Knowing that the console market's tastes can be significantly different than that of the PC gaming marketplace, Activision has redesigned the game to include more arcade action — to go along with the deep simulation found in the original title. The PS version has also been prettied-up and sped-up, with fully texture-mapped environments running at a quick frame rate, and 16 all-new missions. In MW2, the player will have the option of piloting 12 different BattleMechs — each one having access to over 20 different armaments, across a variety of landscapes, ranging from urban areas, to frozen tundra, to desert environments. Players can also choose between an Instant Action mode (new to the PlayStation), which allows players to jump right in and begin shooting, or a career mode, where players can choose between two clans and advance through the ranks, from MechWarrior to Khan (leader of the Klan). We hope to review MechWarrior 2 in our February issue.

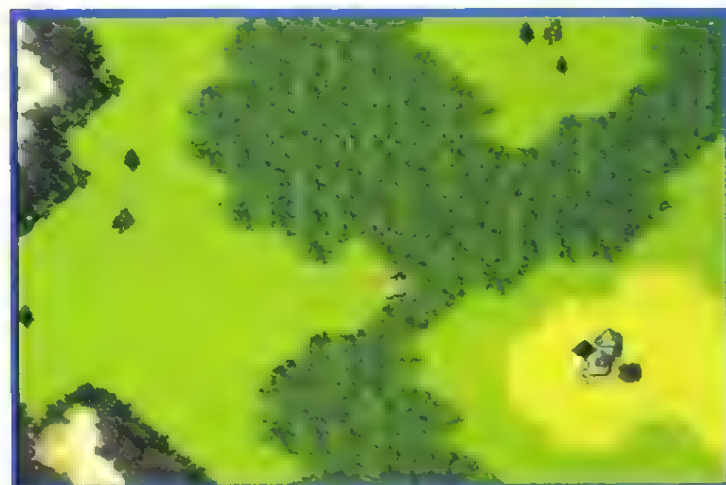
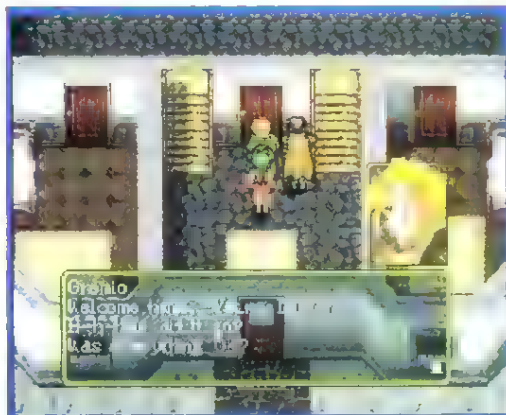
EXPECTING



SUIKODEN

KONAMI • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

There haven't been a whole lot of dedicated RPG's to appear on the PlayStation during its first year. Come to think of it, there's only been one (King's Field is not a 'real' fantasy RPG), Sony's Beyond the Beyond, and it wasn't anything to write the king about. Have faith, ye hit and magic-point lovers: Konami is putting the finishing touches on their translation of the Japanese RPG hit, Suikoden. In the game, you must overthrow an empire, fight your own father and cope with treason and death. Suikoden offers both 2D and 3D, texture-mapped graphics, over 100 different characters to interact with, each with a unique look and traits, and three types of battles: person-to-person, party vs. party and full army battles. Konami believes that this game will capture the minds, imaginations (and dollars) of RPG players when they release the game, this November. Look for our review of Suikoden in the January issue of PSExtreme.



01:00:13:06

How did we come up with the exciting
new features found in Destruction Derby 2?

By accident.

01:00:16:21

Destruction Derby™ 2 is the perfect combo of balls-to-the-wall racing and 3D wreckage. Seven new tracks are longer, wider, faster, plus four destruction bowls. Cars roll, cars flip, cars fly off the track. There's more deadly debris to deal with - tires, doors, hoods get jettisoned and serve as incoming missiles. There's all new fire, new explosions, and improved suspensions for more realistic handling. Destruction Derby 2. Designed exclusively for the true connoisseur of crash. www.psychosis.com



PSYGNOSIS™

01:00:14:17



01:00:18:03



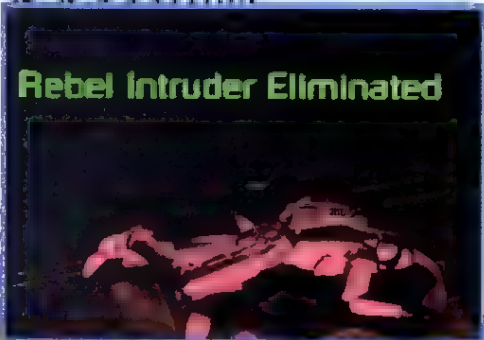
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CRUSADER: NO REMORSE

ORIGIN • AVAILABLE ?

It's 200 years into the future and Big Brother is watching in the form of the World Economic Consortium — a conglomeration of all the world's governments dedicated to imposing its own brand of order without any regard for the will of the people. Free thought and actions are ruthlessly put down by the Silencers, an elite military corps. By the way, you're one of them, but you're tormented with your victim's screams with each and every thought. As a last ditch effort, you have decided to rebel against the oppression and right the wrongs you once fought for. This is the story of Crusader: No Remorse, Origin's first offering for the PlayStation and conversion of last year's successful PC title. Crusader is a mission-based action/shooter set in a 3/4, isometric perspective, where you can, and will, blow up everything in your path. The PC version was very control-intensive with many keystrokes assigned for the various moves. Although they have been somewhat simplified for the PlayStation's controllers, there is still quite a learning curve. We'll go in-depth in an upcoming issue.



Rebel Intruder Eliminated

EXPECTING

CHRONICLES OF THE SWORD

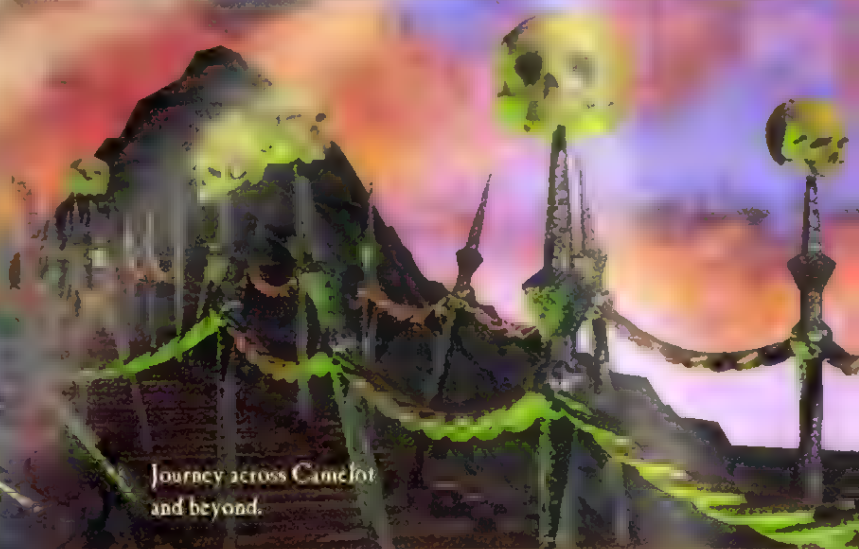
TO SERVE KING ARTHUR. TO BATTLE EVIL. TO RISK ALL FOR THE HONOR OF CAMELOT.



Uphold the virtues of the Kingdom.



A legendary tale of betrayal and murder.



Journey across Camelot and beyond.

King Arthur's Order of the Round Table is threatened. The King's half sister, the evil sorceress Morgana, has vowed to destroy Camelot and all that Arthur has created.



A struggle of virtue against evil sorcery.



JOIN THE QUEST.

C O P Y R I G H T

TOBACCO

AT THE BALLY AMPHITHEATER

FIGHT OF THE CENTURY



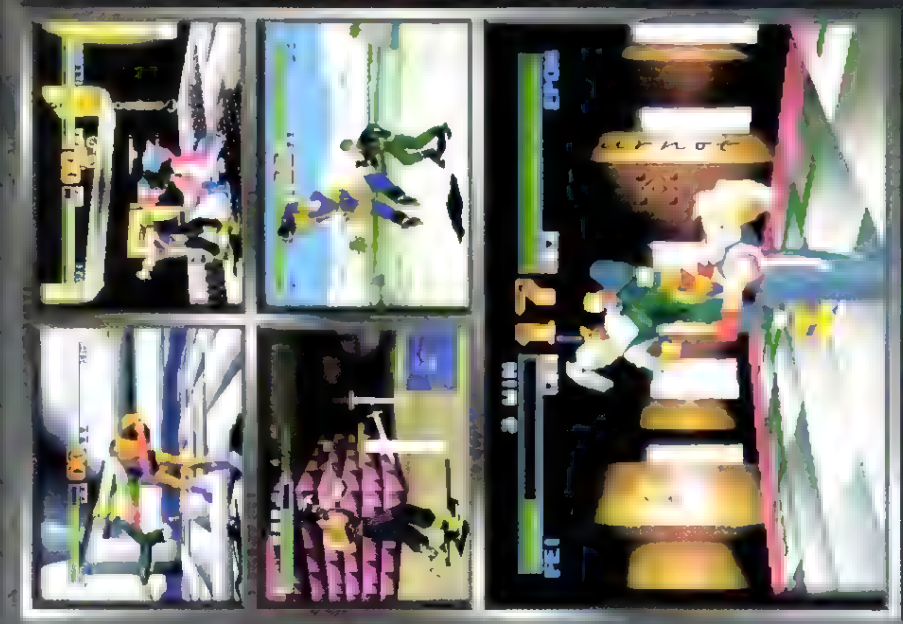
ILL-GOGGA vs CHUJJI

MASTER OF THE HEADLOCK TISS
WITH HEAD-DISPLACEMENT FOLLOW THROUGH.

DELIVERER OF THE QUASI-LEGAL
TORSD LOCKUP/GROIN-DEVIATION COMBO.

FEI VS EPON

MARY VS EREN



Ladies and Gentlemen, it's time for Total No. 1. A spectacle the likes of which the fighting world has never seen. Full 360° 3-D movement that puts you in command of their debilitating moves. Grappling techniques that let you hold an opponent in check before delivering devastation. And for your further entertainment pleasure, we present the Quest Mode. A formidable and unprecedented RPG and fighting game hybrid that will most fully prepare you for clashing with these intergalactic titans.

It all takes place right before your very eyes in Akira Toriyama's internationally acclaimed anime art.

Total No. 1 Show time: 8:00.
30.1.27 Standard Earth Time.
Admission: 50,000 Moolindran.



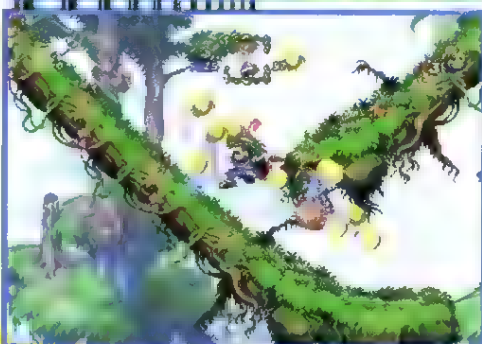
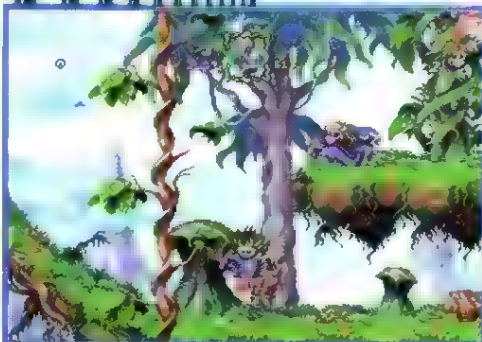
Some items sell 1,000-200,000/200. The charge is \$0.49 per minute. Collectors' items for \$9.99. The Square Enix logo is a trademark of Square Enix Co. © 2000 Square Enix Co. All rights reserved.



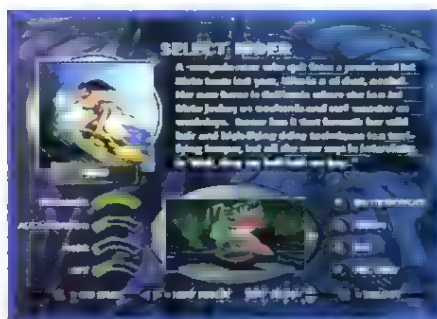
LOMAX

PSYGNOSIS • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

The Adventures of Lomax is Psygnosis' entry into the side-scrolling action-platform category on the PlayStation. The game, featuring over 40 levels of play, four different landscapes (Wild West, Haunted Cove, Evil Ed's Empire and a Medieval castle) and some great, kind of renaissance-style music, centers around the activities of Lomax. Evil Ed has captured his friends and brainwashed them to carry out his evil plan. You are armed with the, now classic, spin attack and a variety of different helmets that work as power-ups. In addition, you must learn to build bridges, dig holes and develop other essential skills to succeed in the game. Our initial impressions of the game are good. The game has a nice, colorful look to it, good play control and great music. Look for the game to hit retail in November and for our review in the January, 1997 edition of PSExtreme.



EXPECTING

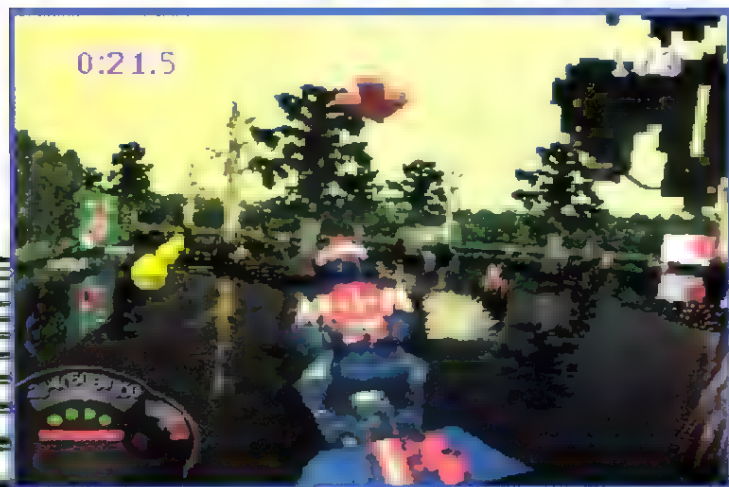
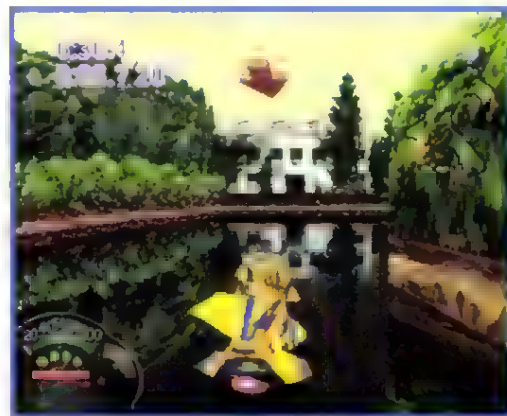


JET MOTO

SONY • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

Racing games are all over this holiday season and Sony has hit the water to distinguish its entry from the competition. Single Trac's Jet Moto is one of the coolest racing games coming to the PlayStation this Christmas. Featuring four different racing teams (including the Mountain Dew and Butterfinger teams (hmm ... vas es los Colonel?)), 20 different racers and 10 different tracks, three of which are immediately accessible within the game, this jet ski racing game is just the ticket for someone looking for a little variety in their racing action. In addition, Jet Moto features a great surf guitar soundtrack (with a little southern comfort thrown in on the bayou-style levels), comic-book style artwork, multiple camera angles, turbo's and corner grapples, head-to-head play, Single Race, Full Season, and Custom Circuit play, a quick frame rate, solid graphics and animation and secret short-cuts. Look for Sony to release the game in November, and for our review next month.

EXPECTING • Page 45





AWESOME REVIEWS.
IT'S LIKE WINNING THE CUP WITH
A SLAPSHOT FROM THE BLUELINE.



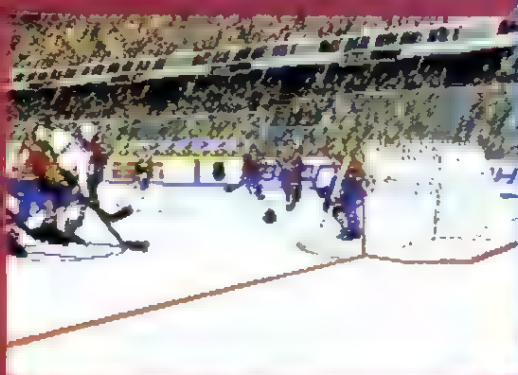
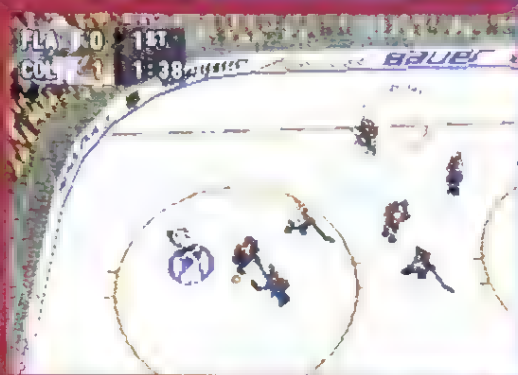
"NHL POWERPLAY '96 IS WITHOUT A DOUBT THE BEST HOCKEY GAME EVER MADE FOR ANY SYSTEM ON ANY PLANET!!! THE INCREDIBLE LOOK AND PLAY LEAVE YOU NO CHOICE BUT TO GO OUT AND BUY THE GAME."
-GAME PLAYERS

"POWERPLAY HAMMERS FACEOFF OPPOSITION... RARELY DOES A VIDEO GAME DELIVER THE ESSENCE OF THE SPORT... POWERPLAY'S GRAPHICS AND GAMEPLAY SKATE AWAY WITH THE CUP."
-GAMEPRO

"POWERPLAY'S GAMEPLAY IS SECOND TO NONE"
-COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

"THE GAME THAT STOLE THE TORCH FROM EA'S NHL SERIES AND BROUGHT THE SPORT OF HOCKEY INTO THE 32-BIT AGE"
-NEXT GENERATION

"THE STRONGEST COMBINATION OF KILLER GRAPHICS AND SOLID GAMEPLAY TO DATE"
-CYBER SPORTS



**NHL
POWERPLAY '96**

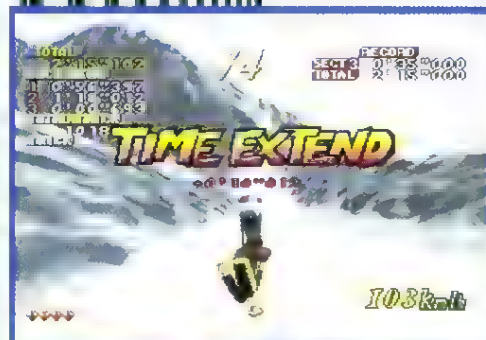
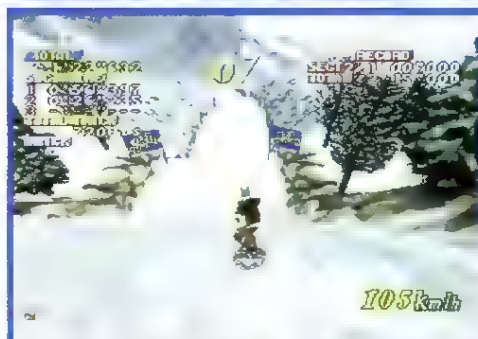




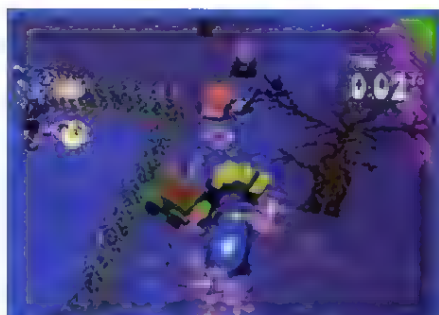
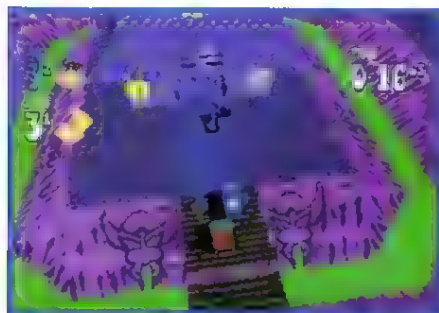
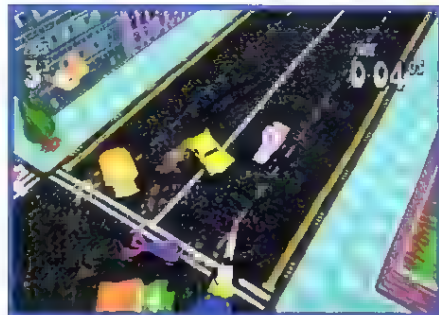
COOL BOARDERS

SONY • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

As seen in previous editions of EXNews and EXPort, Cool Boarders is coming to the PlayStation, courtesy of Sony Computer Entertainment America — just in time for the start of ski season. Cool Boarders is pure arcade action, with a snowboarding game that is more than a little reminiscent of Epyx's classic California Games (the surfing event). Points are awarded for sweet moves, in addition to the time/race aspect of the game (think of it as Ridge Racer on ice). Players can select from three different courses, a number of different boards and eight different male and female alter-egos. In addition, players can record their best runs (under Ghost Data) and then compete against themselves. The game also features running commentary from some dude who sounds like Spicoli from Fast Times at Ridgmont High ("Dude ... here that sound ... that's my skull!" or, "Alllll I neeedd are some tasty waves and a cool buzz.") All right ... Cool Boarders will ship to retail in November and we will review it in our January issue.



EXPECTING

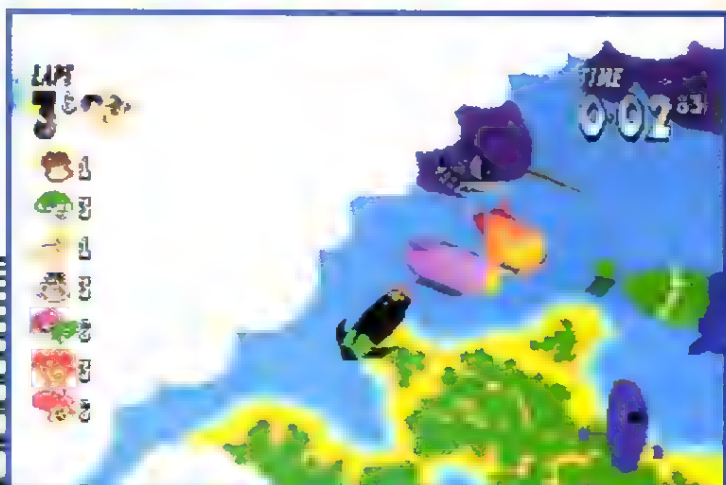


DARE DEVIL DERBY

UBI SOFT • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

We know you're just sitting out there, thinking; "You know, I'm getting tired of all these 3D racers, I just want me a classic overhead game — little Wacky Racers, little Micro Machines, and I'd be really happy." Well, Mindscape has the game for you, then, with Dare Devil Derby. The game is billed as a "cutting-edge, yet comical" racer where players can choose from any of eight different characters and race over 30 different tracks. Dare Devil Derby offers a number of fantasy environments, including racing on a magic carpet, a blimp, racing over the North Pole and underwater. We had a chance to play this one a little before we went to press and, while its not going to win any technology or 'Oh, wow' awards, the gameplay is solid. Look for Dare Devil Derby to appear at retail in November, and for our review in the December edition of PSExtreme.

EXPECTING • Page 49



IT SEEMS EVERY AD
TRIES TO SELL YOU
A GAME WITH MORE



GUTS.



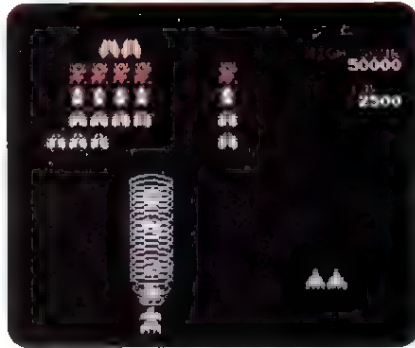
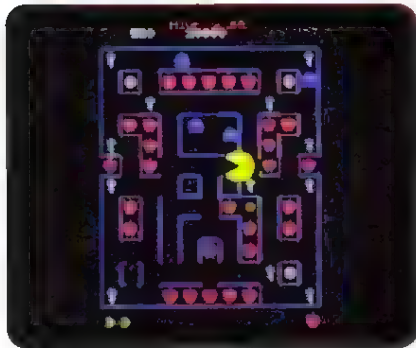
MORE BUTTS.



MORE SMUT.



AND MORE NUTS.



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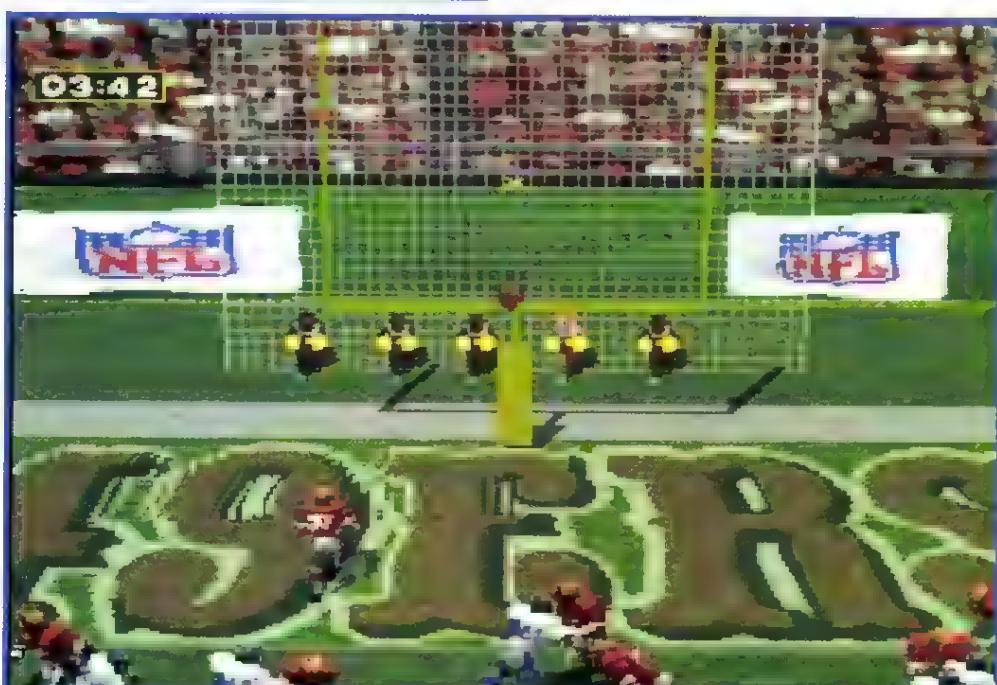
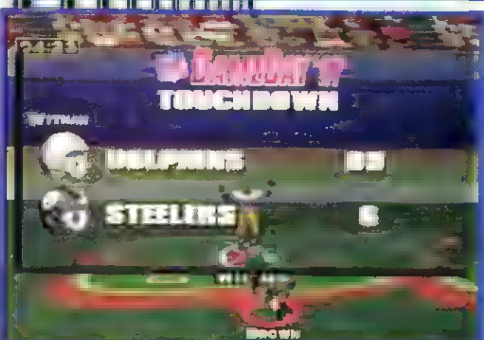




NFL GAMEDAY '97

SONY • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

Just after we closed last month's issue, and completed our GameDay '97 cover feature, we received updated shots of the game — showing player numbers and more detailed animation. The game is coming along nicely and is on target for its pre-Thanksgiving release date. Since we won't have a review on the game until AFTER its shipped, we thought we'd give you a little help in your purchasing decision, should you want to buy the game before our January issue hits. Based on the early playable version of the game, look for more of everything you loved in the original, plus faster gameplay, bigger characters, all of the new moves, a very cool passing meter, a deeper statistical database, a PA announcer, updated rosters and the like. We think the thing that will really make the new GameDay the one to buy is the advanced player control; including dives, one-handed catches, double-spins, the passing meter and more. We'll give you the full hands-on next month.

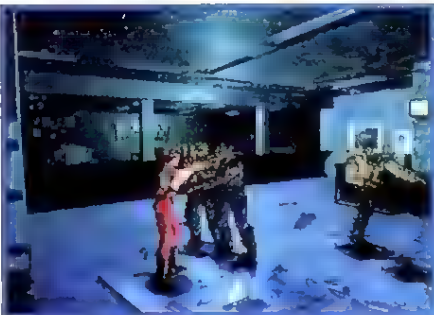


EXPECTING

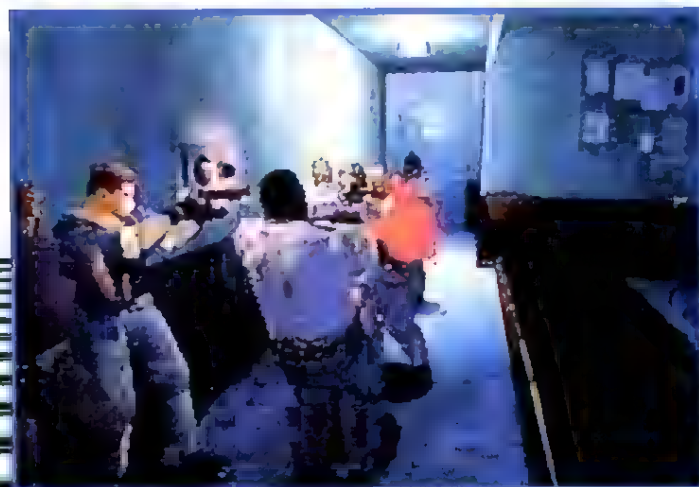
RESIDENT EVIL 2

CAPCOM • AVAILABLE MAY

EXPECTING • Page 53



The STARS team is back and ready to do a little more mansion remodeling! That's right, the sequel to Resident Evil, one of the best-selling games of 1996, is in the works. Resident Evil 2 picks up a few months after the original game. Shortly after the mansion explodes, residents of Raccoon City notice that they have contracted a strange skin disease. Soon, the entire city is filled with the walking dead. The entire urban population has been turned into zombies, while Umbrella's other biological experiments run loose. The story revolves around Leon Kennedy, a rookie cop with only a few days experience on the force, and Elza Walker, a college student trying to avoid the undead ... they hook up at the police station and get ready to take back the town. What can we expect from RE2? While we don't have many details, yet — look for more of everything that made the original great: puzzles, violence and gore. We will bring you more as we get it. Resident Evil 2 is currently scheduled for a May, 1997 release.

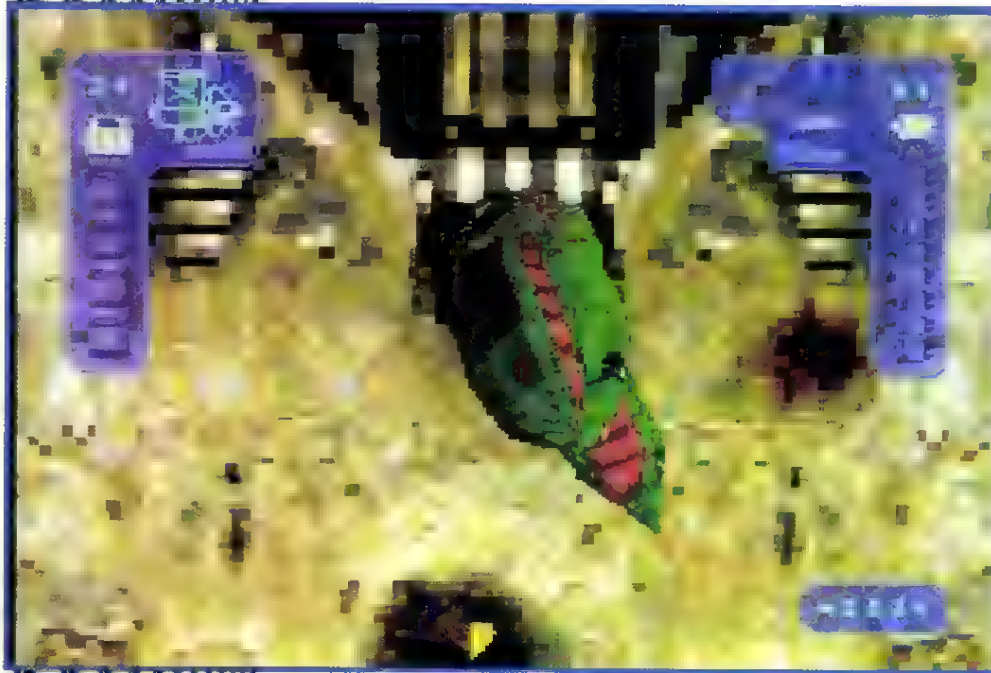


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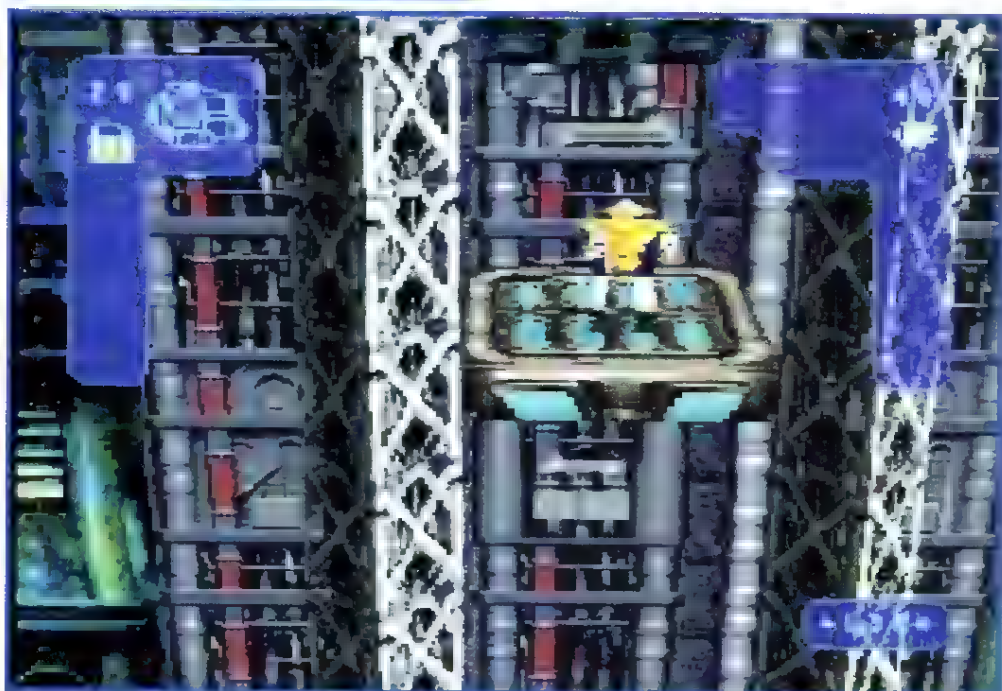
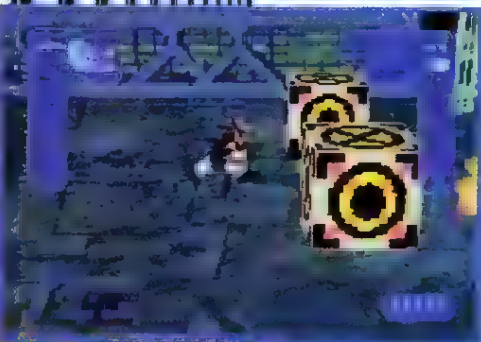
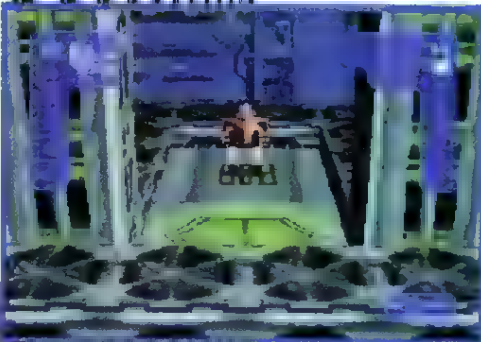
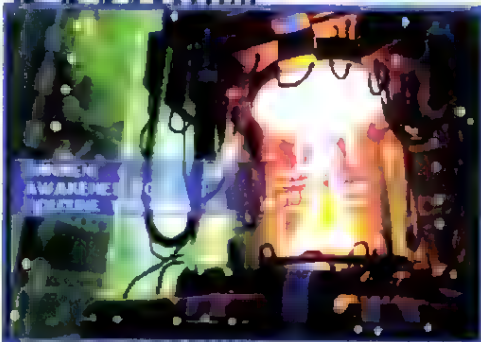
splatter your PS!



THE DIVIDE

VIACOM • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

The game is Viacom's The Divide: Enemies Within, here's the story: The Ka, a race of evolved, autonomous artificial intelligence (wow). Had they not escaped their world, they would have perished under the weight of an authoritarian world where technology was evil (or something like that). As Tanken, an individual sympathetic to the Ka(use), you must help the group find a new planet to colonize. You do this from the relative safety of your Terrain navigator Unit, a mech-robot kind of deal with your character at the controls. The action is presented from a third-person, sort of side-scrolling vantage point, in real-time 3D and involves a lot of platform jumping and shooting. There are more than 15 weapons and power-ups available to you in the game, as well as five different world, different armor, maps and a few bosses thrown in along the way. Look for our review of The Divide: Enemies Within in our next issue and for the game to arrive at retail in November.



EXPECTING

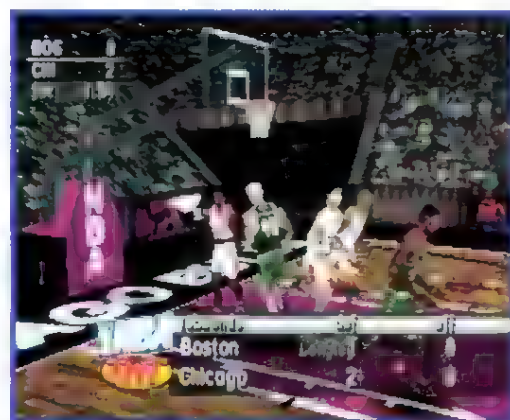


NBA LIVE 97

EA SPORTS • AVAILABLE OCTOBER

EA Sports is about to set a new record by offering the PlayStation owner 2 versions of its basketball series in one year! NBA Live '96 shipped earlier this year — to mixed reviews — and its younger brother, NBA Live 97, will be hitting the streets in November. The last version of the game had just about every feature you could want in a basketball game, so we won't focus on that end of it, other than to focus on the biggest change from the first game — polygon player animation. Like Sony and Konami's games, EA Sports is attempting to give the consumer the most accurate, realistic player animation possible. The version of the game we were given is considered reviewable, but we simply didn't have enough time with the game to do it right, so we'll save the hard-core evaluation for next month. But, for those of you who are going to want a hoop game in the mean-time, we will give you our first impressions. The players look good, but gameplay is still slow and the control is still 'slippery'. Look for the game next month, within the pages of EXRrated.

EXPECTING • Page 55



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www.reloaded.com

reason #: 555!

ROLE PLAYING MY
ASS—
Where Do
I SHOOT?

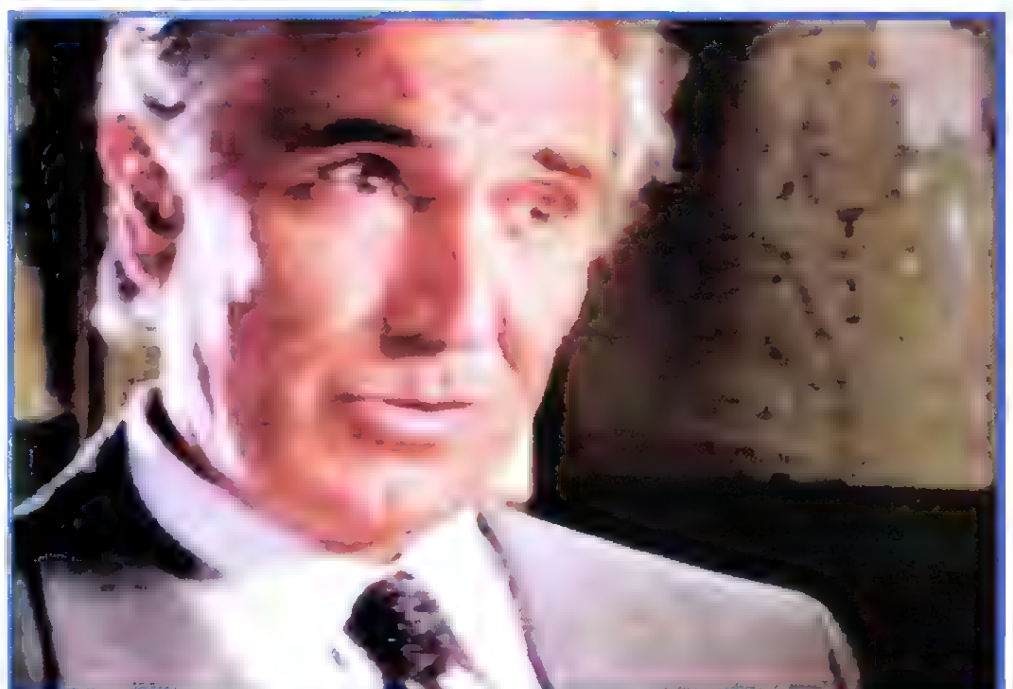
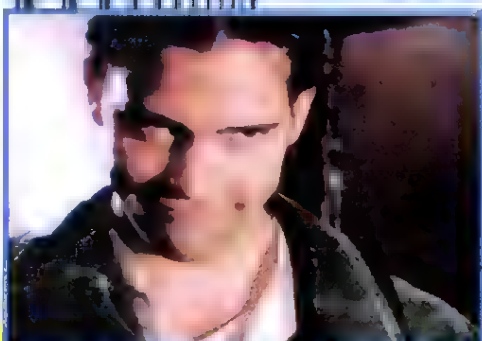
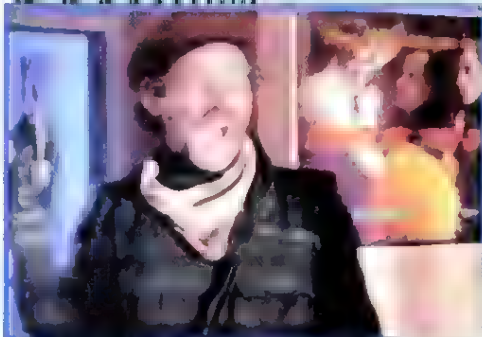
the hard core sequel!



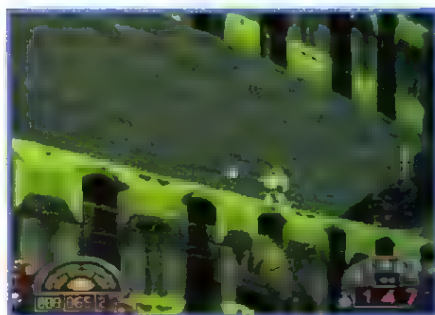
FOX HUNT

CAPCOM • AVAILABLE DECEMBER

Here's one for the "why bother?" category. Capcom has decided to go ahead and release their full-motion-video thriller, Fox Hunt, for the PlayStation. As we all know what happened to the likes of FMV evangelists, Digital Pictures and Rocket Science, games that try to bring the motion-picture, hollywood experience, via FMV, into our homes, usually fail miserably. Although, were not trying to doom this title before it ships, one has to wonder why? In any event, Fox Hunt puts you in the role of a goofy, but well-meaning joe that gets himself in a spot of trouble and has to go undercover, for the government, to get out. The theme of the game is James Bond with a huge dose of the Three Stooges thrown in for good measure and features some B-name acting talent such as Timothy Bottoms. Fox Hunt looks like it will be shipping in time for Christmas.



EXPECTING

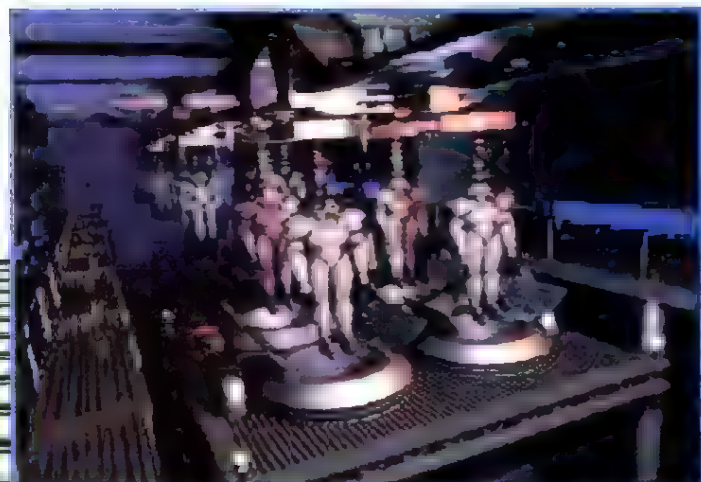


DARK FORCES

LUCASARTS • AVAILABLE NOVEMBER

LucasArts is bringing their massive PC hit Dark Forces, to the PlayStation and PS owners could be in for a BIG treat near the holidays. Dark Forces drops the player right in the middle of a first-person adventure in the Star Wars universe. Assuming the role of Kyle Reese (the story takes place before the original Star Wars Trilogy), players are attempting to bring Darth Vader and the Empire to its knees, over twelve-plus stages of action. Players can shoot, jump, look up and down, strafe, duck, use a number of different weapons and objects, including head goggles, bombs and more, and must solve a number of different puzzles and locate secrets as they progress through the game. The PC/Mac game is one of our all-time favorites and we are expecting nothing less of the PlayStation version. Look for Dark Forces to arrive at retail in late November and for our hands-on review in the January issue of PSExtreme.

EXPECTING • Page 57



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www.reloaded.com

reason #: 938

THE CONSUMER BUGS UP TOE NAILS

MATURE
AGES 17+

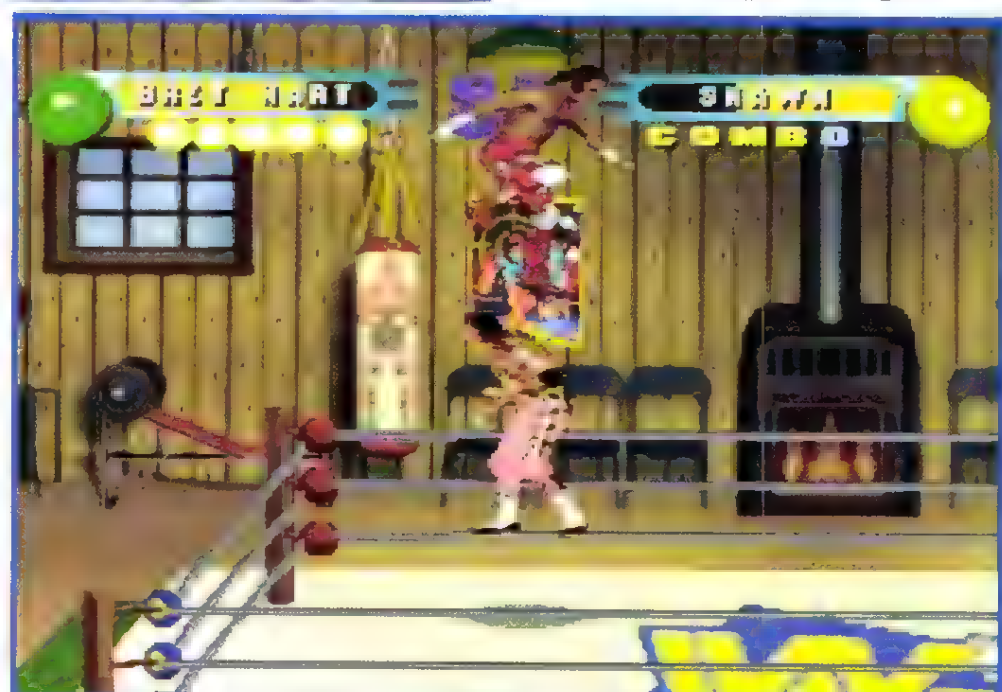
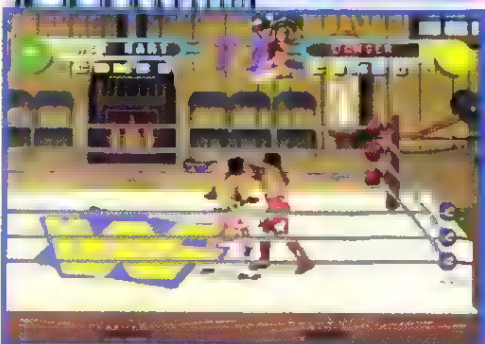
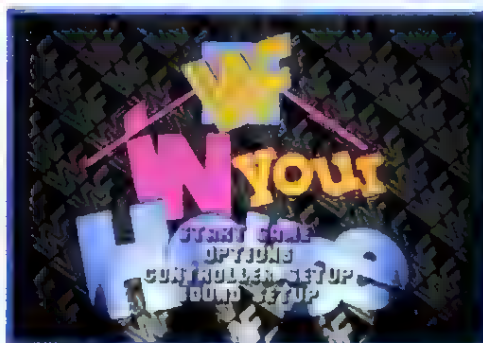
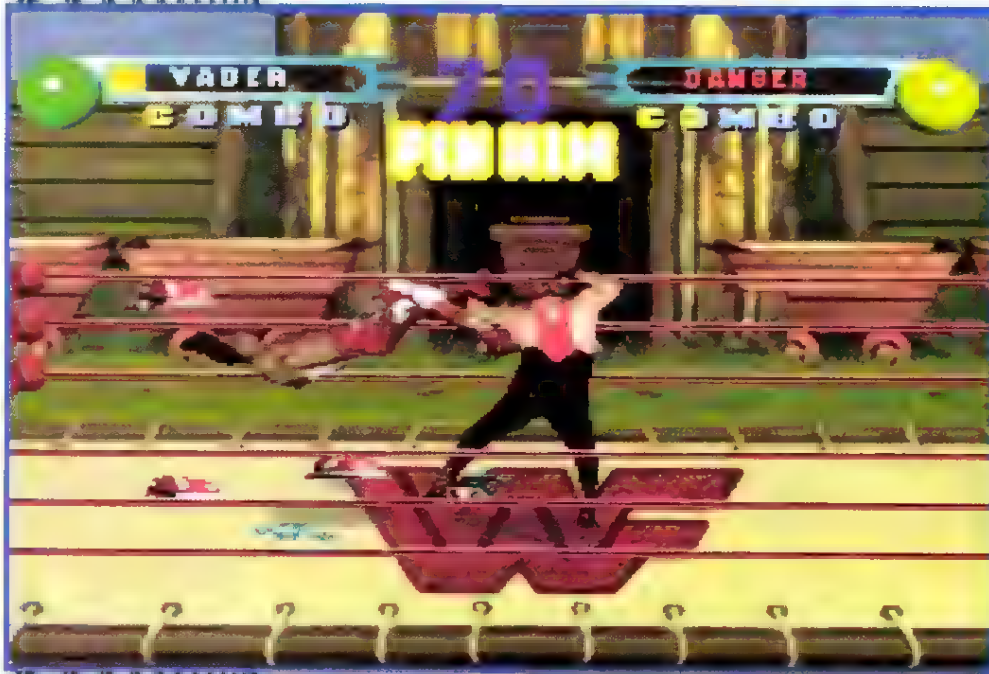
PC 985

PlayStation

Granada

Interplay

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WWF IN YOUR HOUSE

ACCLAIM • DECEMBER

Dave, Eric and Mark have told us that, when they were kids, they used to get all of the pillows in the house, throw them on the floor in front of the TV, fire up a little broadcast-quality wrestling action on a Saturday night, and proceed to beat the crap out of each other. Ah, brotherly love ... Thankfully, they now have video games to limit the pain. And, speaking of wrestling, Acclaim, after having a decent amount of success with their wrestling effort last year, at the PlayStation's north American launch, continues their WWF Wrestling tradition with their upcoming title, WWF In Your House. Although, at this point, the game is still in its very early stages, In Your House is looking pretty darn good with the usual motley crew of outrageous wrestlers along for the ride, including; The Undertaker, Shawn Michaels, Van Vader and Yokozuna. WWF In Your House will feature new overhauls and improvements on last year's version of WWF Wrestlemania, in addition to specially themed back-grounds and rings for each individual character. Players can expect even more moves, a new combo system and plenty of non-stop wrestling action.

EXPECTING

They beat you senseless.

They kidnapped your partner.

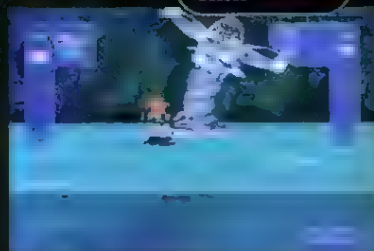
They stole your spaceship.

It's Payback Time.

THE DIVIDE: ENEMIES WITHIN™



Over 20 types of vicious enemies and 8 diabolical bosses



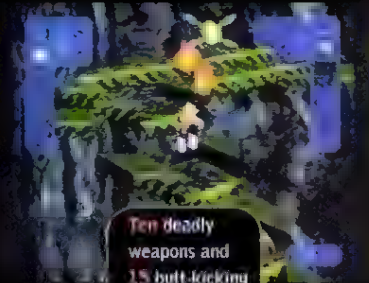
Game art shown is from the PlayStation™ Game Console.

You wake up from an eons-long sleep only to find yourself on a forsaken planet filled with angry mutants. You've got to outsmart them, outblast them, and escape from this hell hole once and for all.

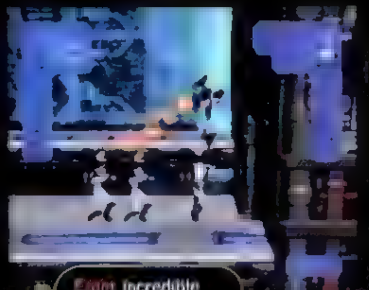
Power-up, my friend.

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SLICING THROUGH THE THIRD DIMENSION TO THE FINAL GALACTIC SHOWDOWN.

It's 2348 and ten of the mightiest galactic warriors are fighting for control of the Earth's fate. Using Plasma power—energy drawn from the user's own mental strength—the good, the bad, and the freaking ugly are each packing hundreds of weapon attacks, countless combos, and the ultimate battle barrage, Plasma Finals. Pick from any of the 4 different game modes of this hyper-realistic 3D fighter and you'll discover the level of precise control only CAPCOM can deliver. All against intense backgrounds like Neo Tokyo, Federation Spaceport, and Planet Zeta; the perfect arenas to master the fine art of mercy killing.



FOURTH EMPIRE

STAR GLADIATOR



STAR GLADIATOR

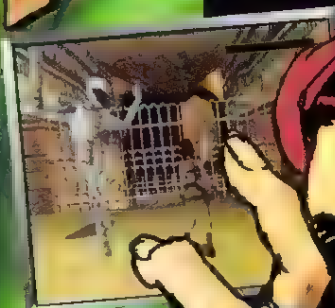
EPISODE: I
FINAL CRUSADE



CAPCOM

www.capcom.com

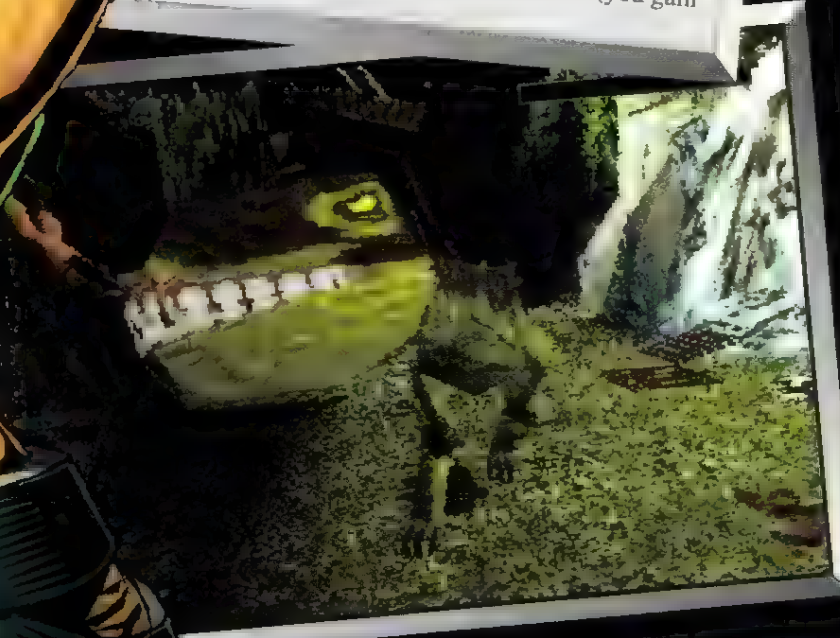
TOMB RAIDER



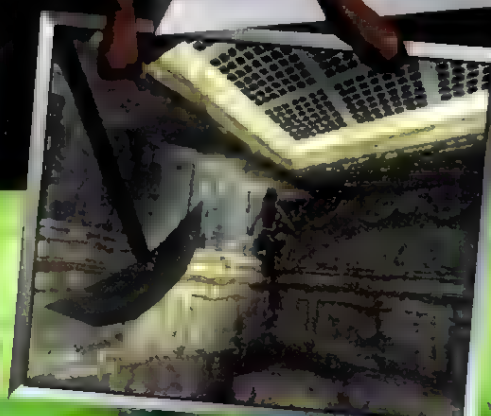
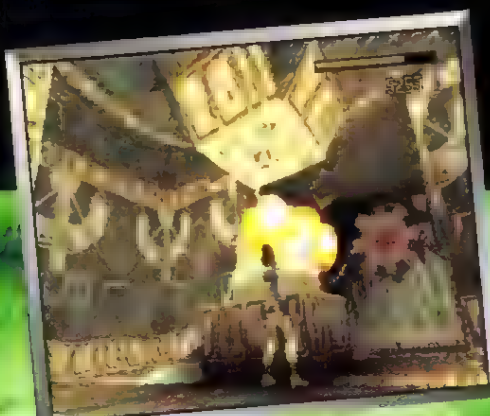
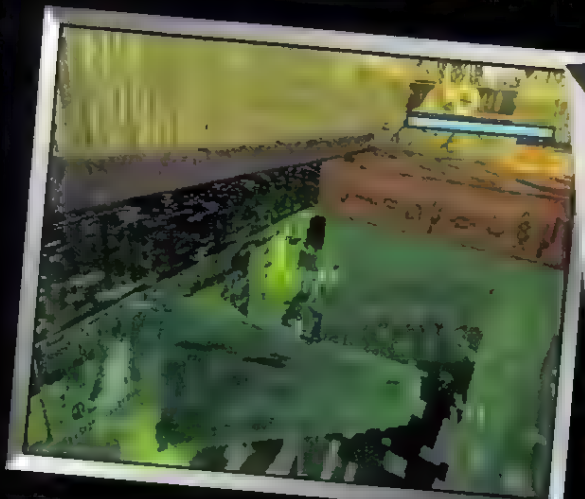
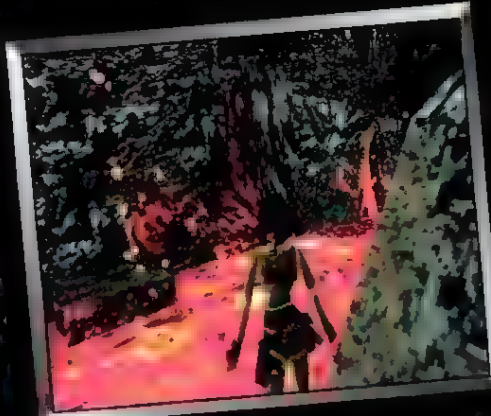
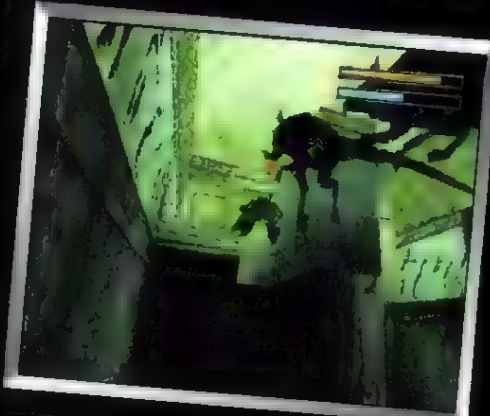
The hardest thing about writing this review is putting the game down to do it. Tomb Raider is, without a doubt, one of the most engrossing, entertaining and believable games that I have ever had the pleasure of playing.

What I mean by 'believable' is that the game dares to challenge you to take on the role of Lara Croft (the femme-fatale, Indiana Jones-like protagonist in the game) and has you crossing that fuzzy, thin, gray line to enter an alternate reality. Many games have claimed that they were bringing the "Hollywood experience" home, only to go heavy on the "Hollywood" and light on the experience. Tomb Raider is built around a huge, detailed three-dimensional world where every thought and action of Ms. Croft is under the player's control. The game is believable in that you never question what you are doing in the game, or why you are there. You are ... and it's up to your jumping, shooting, puzzle-solving and logic skills to get you out and to the end.

The basics of the story are that Lara is a antiquities collector, through whatever means possible, whose services have been retained by Natla Technologies to search three different areas of the world to discover the three, long-lost pieces of the Atlantean Scion. The game's four worlds (you gain

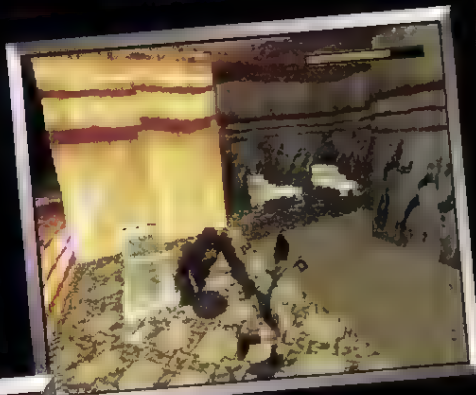


EXTREME



access to the fourth by getting the Scion pieces found in worlds 1-3) effectively recreate the caves and jungles of Peru, an ancient, crumbling Greek/Roman empire, ancient Egypt and, ultimately, the lost city of Atlantis! You start your adventure in Peru, and what an adventure it is! In this area alone, you will work your way through four different levels, with challenges ranging from rope bridges, coyotes and bears, to velociraptors and a T. Rex! As the adventure continues, the worlds and levels become bigger and the challenges greater. I finished this review just after beating the game, and there is so much here that referring to Tomb Raider as merely a 'game' seems inadequate. The graphics are drop-dead gorgeous and the level design would have even the most dedicated draftsman pulling his hair, scale and T-square out trying to replicate the layout of the many spaces within each level. In fact, it is this sense of volume that really sets Tomb Raider's world design apart from all other first/third person action/adventure games. There are some levels where you will find yourself looking up at a waterfall that begins over 100' above the point where you are standing, and you must make your way up to the top. On the same level, you can find yourself swimming 40' below the surface of an underground river. With the many secrets to be found in the game, you will have to explore every square inch of every level to find the weapons and hidden ammo and health that will aid you in your journey.

And it isn't just the detail and beauty of the worlds that gets the job done ... the gameplay is absolutely amazing. For those of you who have ever played any version of the Prince of Persia games, the basic play mechanics are very similar. Lara's moves are even more detailed, and in 3D. She can jump, shoot, hang on to ledges, back-flip, side-flip, swim, side-step, do a handstand, run and walk, roll-flip, and even do a swan dive! These moves can also be accomplished in tandem and are all under the player's control. Let me tell you, you haven't lived until you're hanging 50' above a group of deadly steel spikes, trying to position yourself for the tactical fall! The shooting end of things is done in a



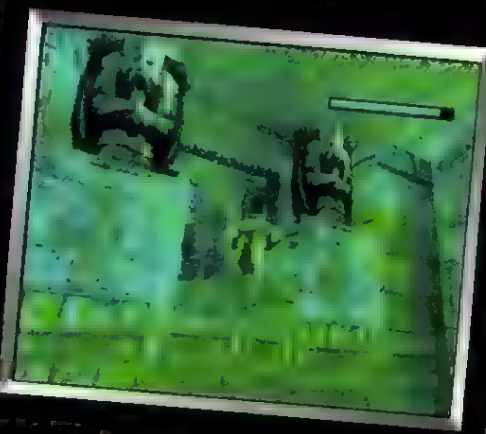
very different manner. The game will help you target enemies as they move toward you, then it is your job to stay on target and firing. So far, I have had access to pistols, a shotgun, a Magnum and an Uzi. But the gameplay doesn't end with the shooting. Working hand-in-hand with the arcade play mechanics are the game's puzzle solving elements.

I have, historically, never been a big fan of RPG's because they aren't usually very realistic. Things like talking to the same guy six times before he will tell me anything annoy me no end and destroy any logical sense of being in the real-world. In Tomb Raider, the game never allows you to recognize that you are simply playing a game. There are no tricks, no cheap computer AI routines to keep you from succeeding. Everything that is needed for you to successfully negotiate your way out of your current predicament is right there for you. You just need to use the ol' noggin' to figure it out. And, make no mistake, it is VERY tough to beat this game. It is just so HUGE. And, if you're trying to find all of the game's secrets, get ready to go into a dark room and not come out for awhile.

Why it has taken so many years for a game developer to figure out that THIS style of game is exactly what role-playing is all about is a mystery

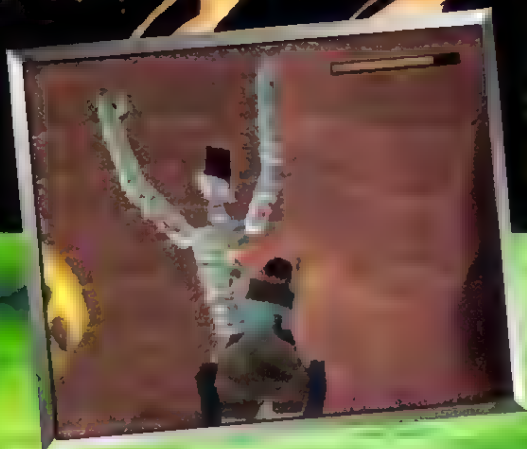
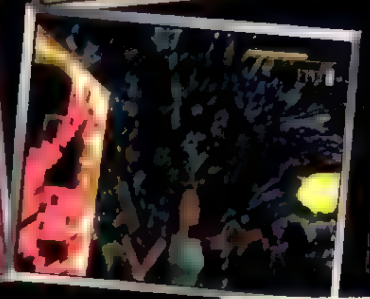
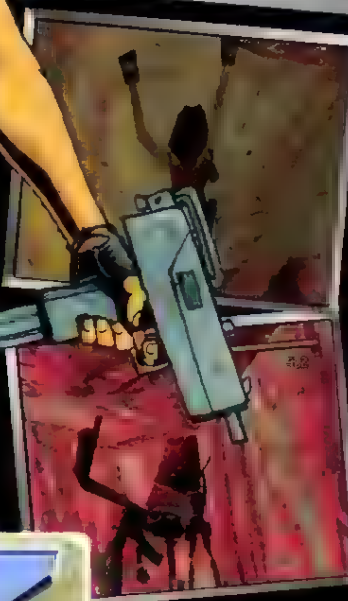


EXTREME



to me. But Core and Eidos have, and gaming has taken a quantum leap forward because of their efforts. The game offers the player the best in every category, with the exception of the soundtrack (the music is good and it IS suited to the atmosphere of the game, but there simply isn't enough of it). It combines thoughtful, inspired gameplay, involving puzzle solving and a heavy dose of jumping and shooting, with gorgeous, detailed worlds that set a new standard on the PlayStation. Simply put, Tomb Raider is the adult Mario and the best adventure I have ever played. It is a game that will appeal to all ages and all kinds of gamers — it is recommended as one of our must-buys for this year, and is our highest scoring game in the history of the magazine.

Dave



X

THE BOTTOM LINE

99%

Tomb Raider is the adult Mario and the best adventure I have ever played. It is a game that will appeal to all ages and all kinds of gamers — it is recommended as one of our must-buys for this year, and is our highest scoring game in the history of the magazine.

GOLD
X

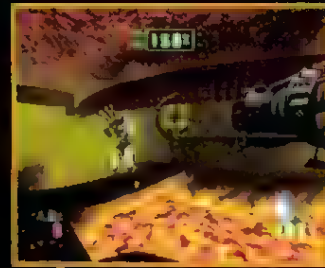
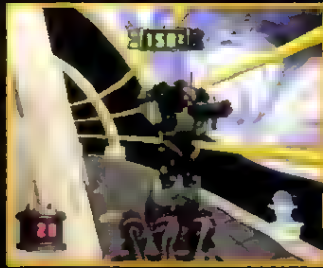
NOW RECRUITING

For The LightStormer Corps

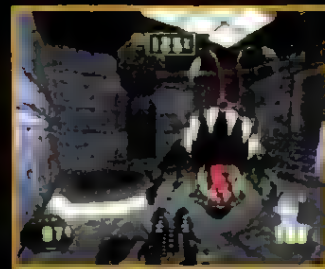


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DISRUPTOR



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TWISTED METAL 2

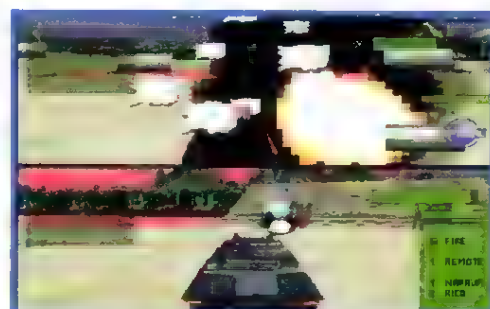
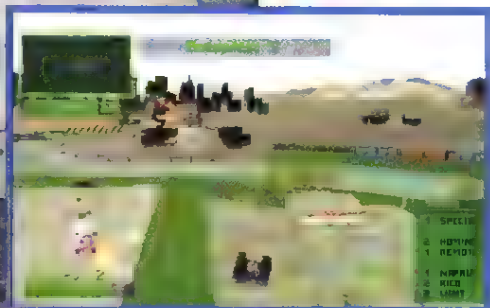
PUBLISHED BY SONY - DEVELOPED BY SINGLE TRACK

Last Christmas, Twisted Metal made its debut on the PlayStation and game players everyone rejoiced. Well, my friends, say it with me; "HALLELUJAH!!!", Twisted Metal 2 is here! Sony's Twisted Metal 2: World Tour, is nearing completion and it should be arriving on store shelves about the time you read this. Listen, go out and buy it. But first, let me explain...

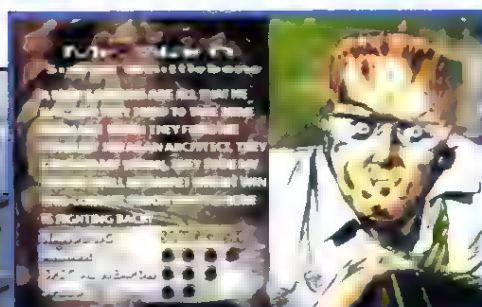
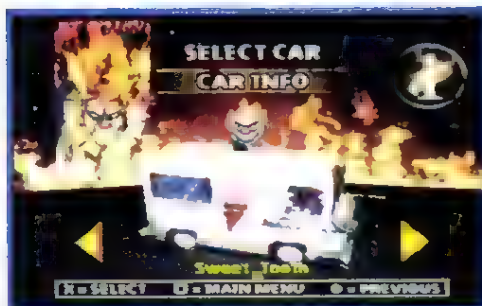
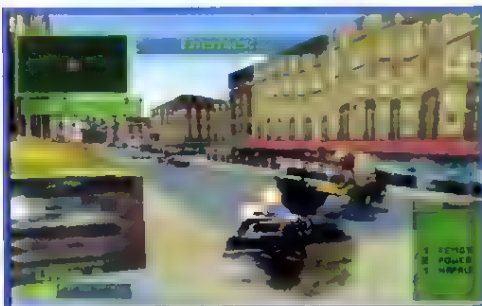
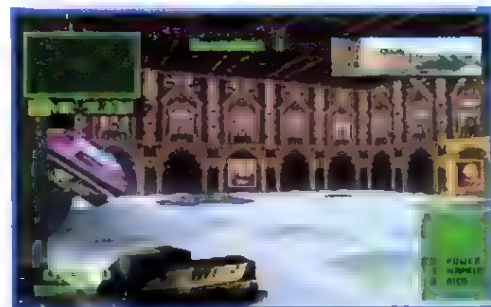
At first glance, TM2 might look like just another rehash of it's predecessor. That statement could not be any further from the truth. Most of the original characters are back, and looking much meaner too. Making their first appearance in the new tournament are: Grasshopper, a green dune buggy that likes to jump on enemies; Axel, a cyborg man/machine who is tough as nails; Twister, an Indy-style car which unleashes deadly hurricanes; Mr. Slam, a tractor driver who is a bit whacked; and Shadow, a purple Hearse which is looking for business. This time, the Evil Calypso wants his new tournament to take place in major cities across the earth. Do they ever... You



can now battle in cities such as Paris, New York, Hong Kong, L.A., and even Antarctica. The kicker here is that you can interact with the backgrounds, using them to your advantage. Bust through the front door of the louvre, shoot down the Eiffel Tower and use it as a bridge, or blow up your local convenient store after finding out you didn't win at Keno. It's all in there... except for the Keno. Your mission is to go through 8 levels and ultimately face the final boss, Dark Tooth. On the way, you meet up with old, arch-enemies like Sweet Tooth and Minion, both of which are playable, via codes. Also hidden within the game are secret battlegrounds for 2 player deathmatch



EXTRATED



action.

The best, and most original, part of TM2 is the hidden combo system. With the new Special Move bar, players can perform certain d-pad presses which will result in execution of hidden Special Moves. Some of these moves include: Freeze Ball, where you shoot out a ball of ice which renders your opponent helpless for a few seconds; Shields, where you become invincible for a short period of time; Jump; Minion's Special Weapon, where you get to use the mid-bosses special move; Mines; Reverse Fire, where you shoot your #2 weapon behind you; and Invisible, where your car actually disappears. When performed, each moves eats up some of your Special Move bar, which recharges at a rather slow pace. When combined together, players can create awesome car-combos which can "off" (no... not Greg) opponents in no time. Imagine: freezing an opponent, charging them with machine guns blazing, grabbing them with Mr. Slam's tractor bucket, slamming them

as you fire two power

missiles, freezing them before they hit the ground, and slamming them again! Now that HURTS!

Straight-up, this game is beautiful. Meticulous detail was implemented throughout, and the design team really came through by making this game play like a dream. In addition to the beautiful visuals, great theatrical music keeps you gaming, as well as almost-too-realistic sound effects. I have to wonder if they sampled some of the sounds from actual warfare.

Ben's Breakdown: There are not too many games out there that reach out and grab my attention, let alone hold it for more than a few hours. I could not put Twisted Metal 2 down. Awesome gameplay, awesome graphics, awesome music ... it's just plain fun. Twisted Metal 2 is a gem for all PlayStation owners to enjoy. I definitely recommend this title to anyone and everyone as it is one of the best games I have EVER played.

Ben



THE BOTTOM LINE

97%

There are not too many games out there that reach out and grab my attention, let alone hold it for more than a few hours. I could not put Twisted Metal 2 down. Awesome gameplay, awesome graphics, awesome music ... it's just plain fun. Twisted Metal 2 is a gem for all PlayStation owners to enjoy. I definitely recommend this title to anyone and everyone as it is one of the best games I have EVER played.



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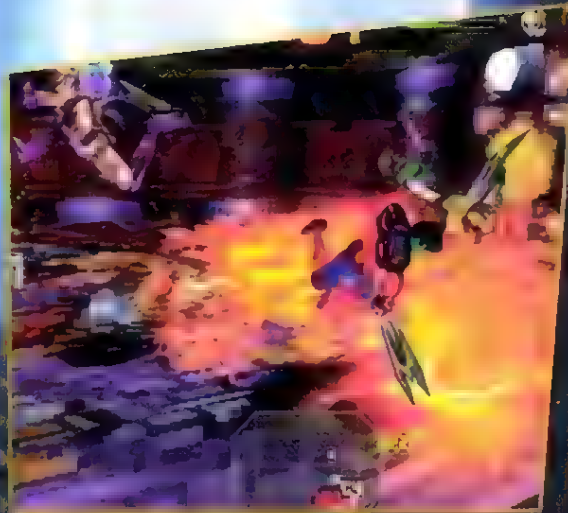
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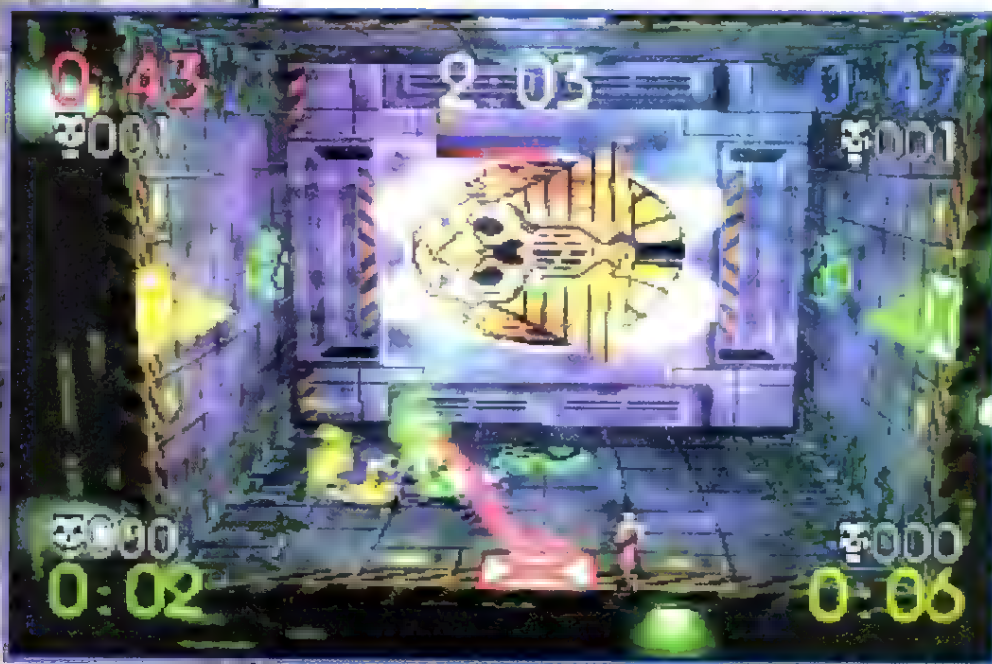
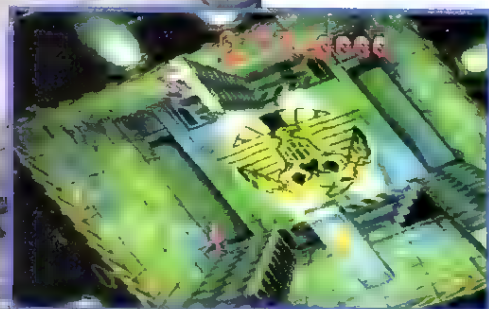


AGES 17+

Multitap Adaptable
1-4 Players

BLAST CHAMBER

PUBLISHED BY ATTENTION TO DETAIL - DEVELOPED BY ATC



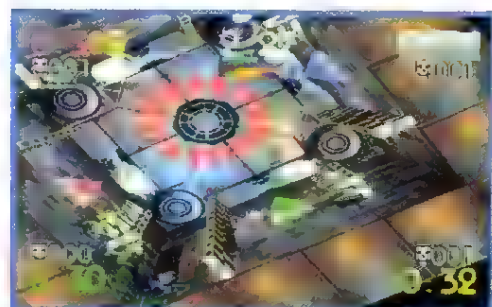
Okay, so it's the year 2096 and there are these four armor-clad players with bombs strapped to their bodies. The bombs slowly count down to zero, at which point the players blow into meaty chunks. The players frolic in a series of 20 square-shaped arenas. The arenas can be rotated when one of the players kicks any of the numerous glowing arrows in the walls. There are four triangular "reactors," one for each player, and a "crystal" (the ball). Each player tries to take the crystal (which stops his bomb clock) and stuff it into his own reactor (to increase his bomb clock by 20 seconds) or another player (to reduce the opponent's bomb clock by 25 seconds). Depending on the game mode, the player who blows up the least, or the last player to survive, wins.

That's the madness of Blast Chamber, a game that sounds like a brilliant twist on the classic Bomberman but doesn't quite have the gameplay to match — due to the slight design errors of Attention To Detail, the development group best known for

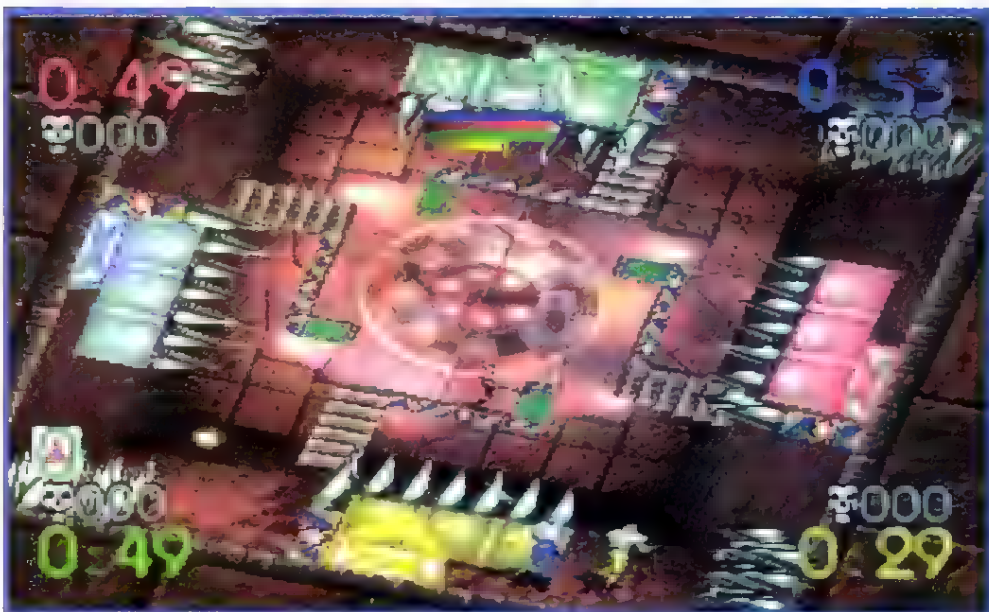
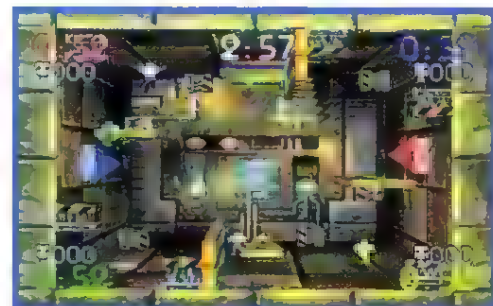
the mediocre Jaguar game Cybermorph.

There are three modes of play in Blast Chamber. Free-For-All is the mode in which you try to suffer the least amount of explosions in three minutes; Elimination is the mode in which you try to be the last man with all his limbs intact; and Solo Survivor is the one-player mode, in which you "solve" an ever-more-difficult series of 40 arena puzzles. The Free-For-All and Elimination modes also have Tournament variations in which you play through all 20 multiplayer arenas, one at a time.

Alright, let's get right into my biggest beef with Blast Chamber; the gameplay often lacks excitement. The explosions aren't flashy enough. The power-ups (freezing other players, running faster) aren't interesting enough. The sound effects aren't intense enough, especially the pitiful explosions. The players can only run, jump, and push, which means you spend at least half your game time playing a futuristic version of rugby, clustered together in a pile while the crystal



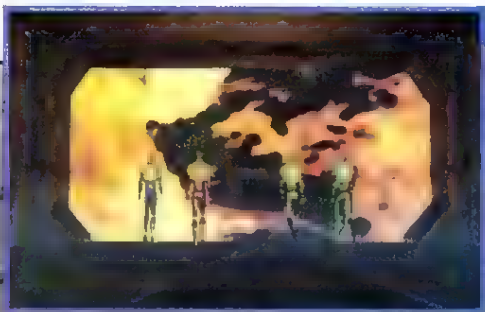
EXCRATED



onto suspended platforms. I also don't like the scoring system Blast Chamber uses in the Tournament mode. At the end of a round, points are doled out like so: 500 for first place, 400 for second, 300 for third, and 200 for fourth. This is regardless of how well the first-place finisher did, or how poorly the fourth-place guy fared. The point system keeps sucky players in the running much longer than it should, and doesn't reward players who dominate. Maybe a score based on how many kills you caused (and suffered) would've been better. The one-player Survival Mode is more tedious than challenging — which is almost always the case with multi-player-oriented games like this — but the multiplayer mode is moderately fun, although it too often turns into a “game” of four people shoving each other around.

It's no Bomberman, but Blast Chamber is a good multiplayer game. It's just too bad the execution couldn't match the concept.

Zach



bounces between the four players faster than a Mexican jumping bean. And it's sometimes hard to make out the depth of the arenas, which is frustrating in the more complicated ones that require you to jump



THE BOTTOM LINE

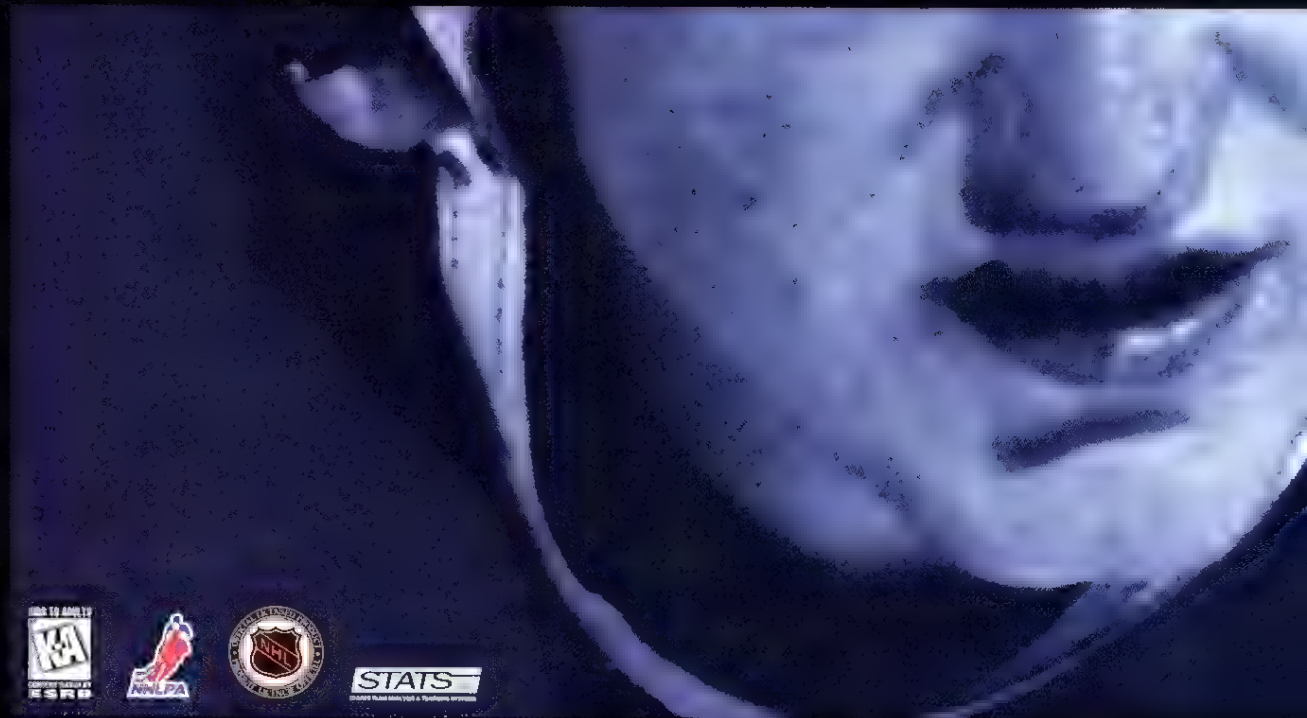
... The one-player Survival Mode is more tedious than challenging — which is almost always the case with multi-player-oriented games like this — but the multiplayer mode is moderately fun ... It's no Bomberman, but Blast Chamber is a good multiplayer game. It's just too bad the execution couldn't match the concept.

87%





He spent years scrapping,
clawing and grinding for the
right to play in the NHL.[®] All
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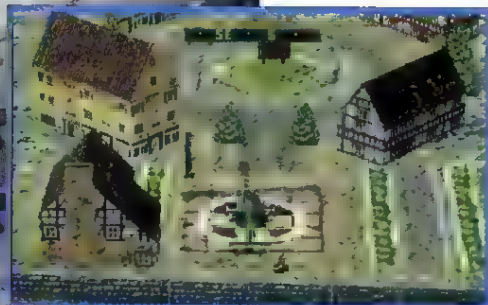


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SOVIET STRIKE

PUBLISHED BY EA - DEVELOPED BY GRANITE BAY SOFTWARE



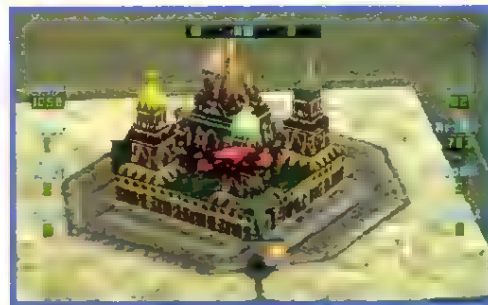
heavens. Soviet Strike doesn't skip a beat, and adds quite a bit of fluff to the offering.

There are five levels to get through in Soviet Strike, with each level requiring the gamer to perform another five to nine missions. In all, there are over thirty different assignments to be completed! If this sounds like something that isn't going to mastered quickly, then you're listening well. Each level can take up to forty-five minutes, and I don't care how easily you got through the previous titles, it won't happen with Soviet Strike.

First of all, the latest title is almost more brains than muscle (I know, unheard of in a shootdemup). There is just enough fuel and ammo to accomplish the tasks at hand - don't even think about doing any sight-seeing or destroying things out of order! Secondly, if you spend a little too much time trying to figure out the best way to attack an area, the entire mission will be scrubbed and you'll have to start back at the beginning of the level. You'll notice messages in the bottom left of the screen that read



EXTRATED



"Friendly HQ destroyed" or "fuel destroyed", letting you know that there is action taking place outside of your view. When negative occurrences happen enough, you'll hear the commander on the radio telling you to high tail it back to camp! In Soviet Strike, there is little or no room for error! Seriously, if you don't have controller calluses on your hands, don't even bother trying to get through this one. The weak of knees need not apply.

I have been a great believer in the Strike series since inception. I've found each title to be imaginative, challenging, and at times, to have the intensity that finds you on the edge of your seat. While the latest offering from EA has, in varying amounts, all the above characteristics, I find myself, in the age of the Playstation, expecting more. Sure, the texture mapped terrains are nice to look at, and the FMV actually adds to the story, but it doesn't appear that EA went as far as they could have, given

the capabilities of the

machine. In Urban Strike, your character was able to land the Apache Chopper and go off on foot inside some buildings and even Casinos (viva Las Vegas). I was hoping for this experience in Soviet Strike, and then having the developers take the concept into a 3D perspective, a la Doom, etc. Not only did this not happen, but you don't even get to get out of the chopper at all. Very disappointing! However, for a positive spin, the story line is filled with real time drama, and the occasional humor breaks up the tension ("I've waited here so long I've got squatters' rights!"). The landscape is picturesque – just wait until you get a load of Moscow!

Unfortunately, for as much as I like Soviet Strike, and the Strike series in general, I can't hide my disappointment with the latest offering. While a solid game despite the flaws, a few new wrinkles on the theme (tired?) would have helped tremendously.

Eric



THE BOTTOM LINE

Unfortunately, for as much as I like Soviet Strike, and the Strike series in general, I can't hide my disappointment with the latest offering. While a solid game despite the flaws, a few new wrinkles on the theme (tired?) would have helped tremendously.

82%



DISRUPTOR

PUBLISHED BY UNIVERSAL - DEVELOPED BY INSOMNIAC GAMES

Universal Interactive's Disruptor (featured on our July '96 cover) continues along the lines of its prestigious PlayStation predecessors (say THAT three times fast), Doom and Alien Trilogy, by offering the PS gamer what he truly craves in first-person action games — speed, graphic brilliance, depth and the all-important sense of dread and impending doom.

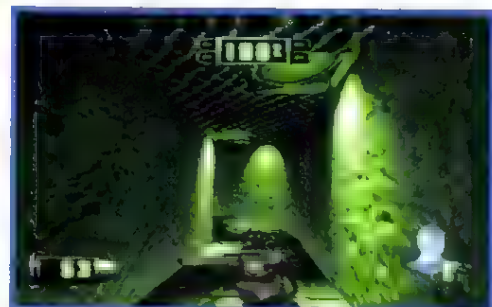
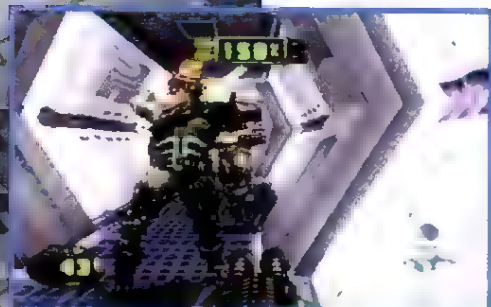
First, to the speed and graphic brilliance issues: Disruptor is a beautiful game that offers incredibly detailed environments that cut through your field of vision at a pace that seems to indicate a frame rate of close to 30 frames per second. This 3D engine, courtesy of the game's developer, Insomniac games, is, unquestionably, the latest in a series of new standard-bearers for this type of game — as it effortlessly draws the player into its world.

Unfortunately, and I really don't know why the Disruptor team kneeled before the false-deity known as FMV, the cut scenes fail to maintain the level of graphic quality found in the game. They send the Bad-Acting-O-Gram WAAAY off the charts and the quality of the video is as cheesy as the acting is Melrose Place-ish.

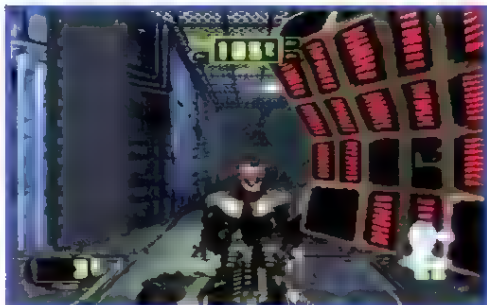
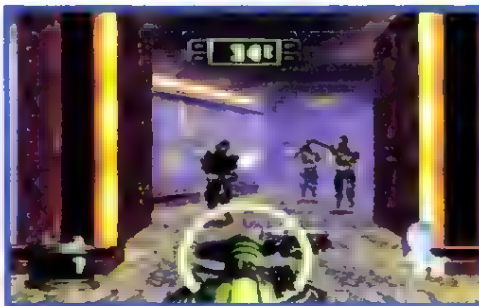
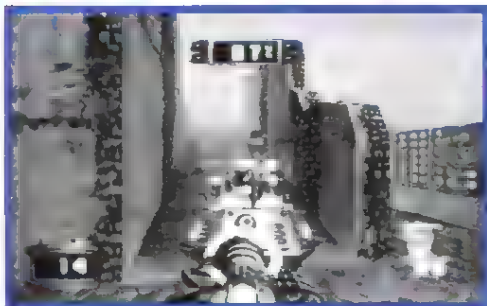
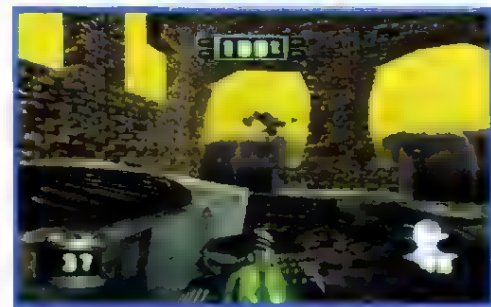


Fortunately, for those of us who play a lot of games, and with itty bitty attention spans, the brain-trust at Sony Computer Entertainment included that universal editor of bad video on the control pad — known simply to you and I as the 'Start' button. Even better ... the FMV is the only bad thing about the game — it is an absolute blast to play.

Like its brethren, Disruptor take classic Doom-like play elements and drops the player in the middle of a hostile, alien-infested environment. You begin with the space-age equivalent of a pop-gun and upgrade weapons as you move through each of the game's 13 levels (including boss levels). In addition, you have 'Psysonics' at your disposal — a Shirley McClain kind of gift where you are able to project mental energy at your combatant and collect their own mental 'essence' from them. The core of the game lies in the limited supply of ammo found on each level for the different weapons — there always seems to be just barely enough to do the job ... if you make good use of your supplies. The same can be said for health power-ups, where they always seem to arrive in just the nick of time.



EXTRATED



Things start to heat up and get tricky at Level 5 (Terraformer on Triton). The enemies get more aggressive and intelligent and the onslaught is relentless. The key to success lies in having patience as you move through the levels — Disruptor is definitely a thinking man's shooter and it rewards those who mix a little cat-and-mouse with their in-your-face shooting action. One of the tricks I use is, when approaching a blind intersection (this happens A LOT in the game), to run out into the intersection and quickly back peddle to my safe spot. The bad guys will see you, shoot at you, usually say something to you, then chase after you. Make sure you

have a fully charged (or loaded) weapon and let the pigeon hunting begin! The audio response from the enemies is key to knowing they're coming after you — this touch is also indicative of the overall quality of the sound and orchestration in Disruptor.

The soundtrack includes different mood pieces for each level that are very, very good — and reminiscent of a John Williams or Danny Elfman soundtrack ... top notch Noonan ...top notch! Other than the mystifying inclusion of the lame-oid video, Disruptor is quality through-and-through. I am scoring it a few points below Alien Trilogy because the license brought that game a level of excitement that is hard to beat, but the gameplay experience is just as good and the graphics, as good as Alien Trilogy was, are even better in Disruptor. If you've owned a PlayStation for awhile and enjoyed Alien Trilogy and Doom, you won't want to miss this one. And, if you're new to the PS world, grab a controller and pony up the cash, Disruptor is what your PlayStation was meant to play.

Dave



THE BOTTOM LINE

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93%



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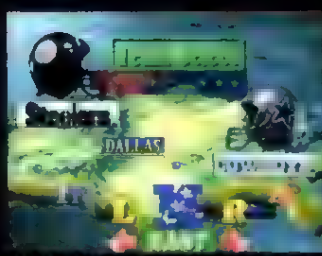
Tecmo Super Bowl allows the user to trade any player, to any team, at any time. With this feature you have the ability to create your own Super Team. Just be careful when you're playing a friend. You had better make sure he didn't set you up. The only advice we can give is check your opponent's roster.

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Tecmo Super Bowl's announcer gives true play by play commentary, not just an occasional phrase or two. If perhaps you think he's an idiot, you always have the option of turning him off.

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Over the years Tecmo Super Bowl players have let us know about the friendly competitions which sometimes take place. This new version has a built in tournament mode for a



total of 8 players playing one on one till one of the players wins the tournament. Chips and drinks are sadly not included.

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Knowing that some people haven't been playing Tecmo Super Bowl for years we've included 3 difficulty settings. Easy, Normal and Hard. Our football game gives you the ability to grow with the game. Internally we call this a screen save 'cause you don't have to throw a rock through the TV screen when you get frustrated with the game.

INSTANT REPLAY

If you want to analyze the last several seconds of play, simply pause the game and start the instant replay. In addition you can go frame by frame to fully analyze all of the action. Then again, you may not want to see the interception again, and again, and again, and again.

NEW RECORDS & STATS

Tecmo's stats engine has always been unsurpassed. This year we've added the ability to keep the stats from any player in any position even if it's only for 1 play during the entire season. Here's your one and only chance to re-write the record book.

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From the game play menu, you now have access to the entire playbook for the immediate play. ...for more plays than you can possibly want, use, call, send-in, modify, change, and/or run as the case may be.

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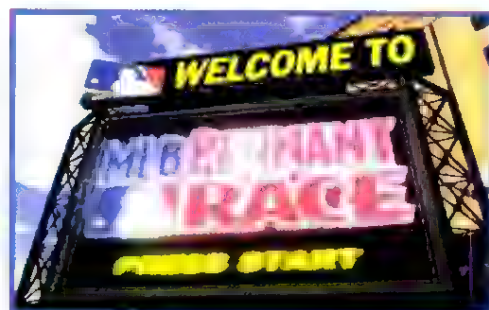
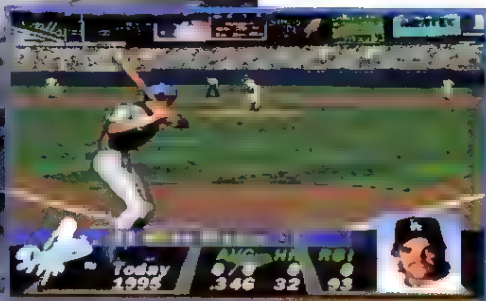
Tecmo's Decision answers (There are no correct answers... Welcome to Tecmo's Decision)



PLAYERS™

MLB PENNANT RACE

PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY SONY

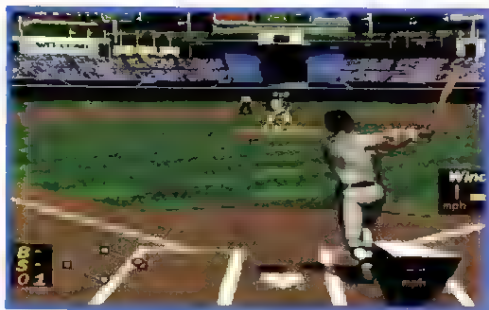


The wait has been long, baseball fans may even say it's been as grueling as the season itself. While the release of Sony's MLB Pennant Race has been delayed from spring to fall, the game has lost little of its allure to baseball lovers who wanted to see what the makers of GameDay, Face Off and Shootout would deliver between the base paths. The short answer is "a lot" — the long answer is that there are numerous little shortcomings in the product that make the game less than it could have been.

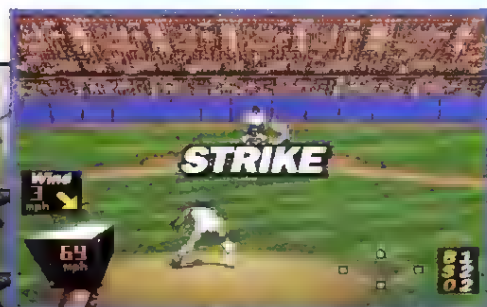
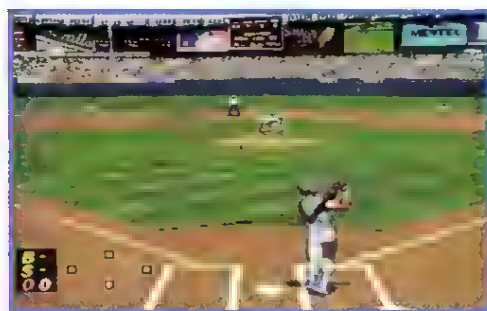
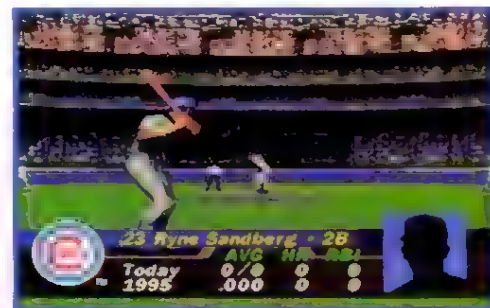
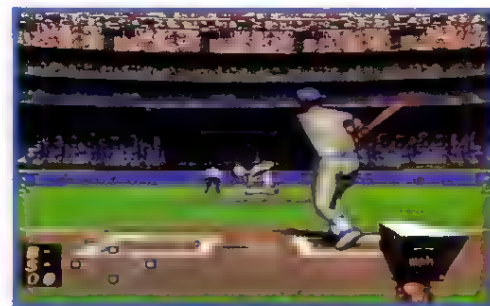
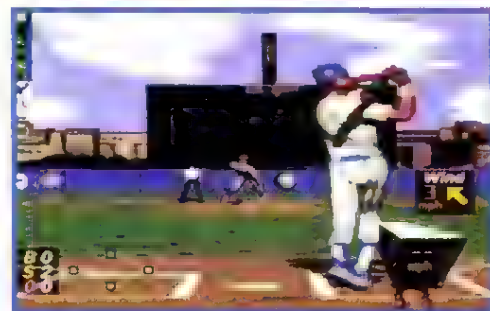
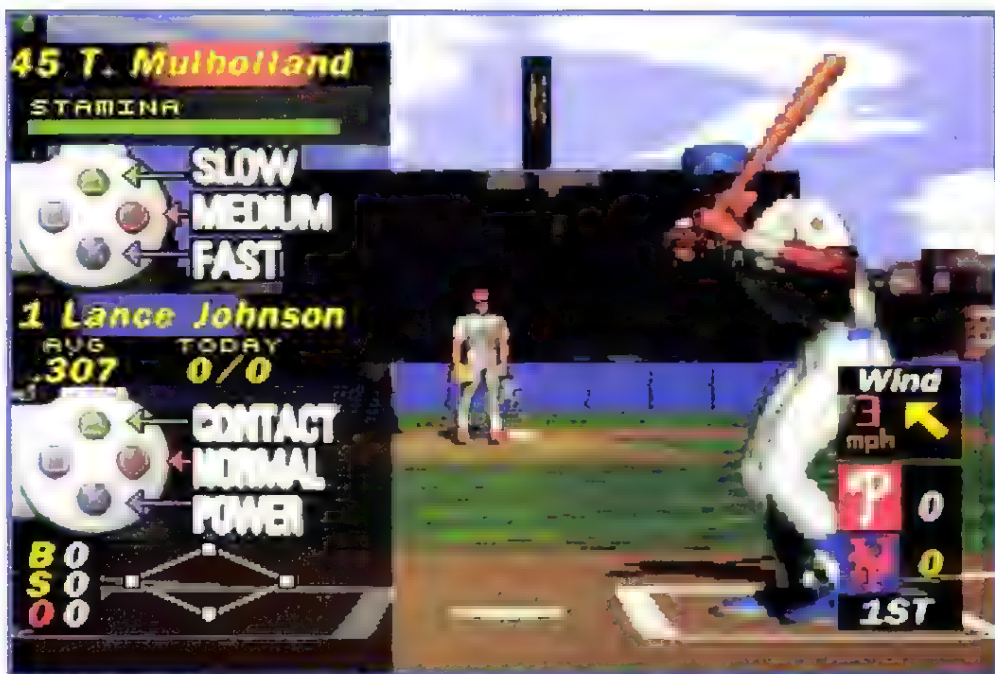
The good stuff includes user-control over every facet of the game. From exhibition and season play, to all of the ballparks and teams, to both arcade and sim. style play, to the impressive statistical database, to the San Diego Padres' Jerry Coleman in the booth, to multiple camera angles, a Home Run Derby, etc., etc., MLB Pennant Race challenges EA Sports' Triple Play '97, feature-for-feature, and it also challenges the sim. features of Hardball 5, and the gameplay features of Bottom of the Ninth.

The look and sound of the game is impressive, with a good selection of organ tunes adding a historical feel to the game and a graphic environment that, while not as detailed as that found in Triple Play, is attractive. It also has all of the gameplay elements, including full defensive positioning, roster management, full control over players in the field, including speed bursts, sliding, jumping and diving, pitch location, bat location, leadoffs and more. In a nutshell, MLB Pennant Race seems to have all of the stuff that normally gets you a "Gold" rating in PSExtreme ... normally.

The problem with the game is that it tries to be a little Triple Play '97, a little Hardball, and a little Bottom of the Ninth, and the game ends up lacking its own identity. The price the gamer pays comes in a game that plays much slower than expected (even in arcade mode with the announcer's voice off — which slows the action down considerably) and in a collection of things that don't work particularly well. The behind-the-pitch-



EXTRATED

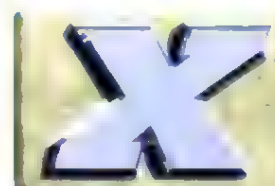


er view, as an example, has a hard time keeping your fielder in the viewing screen. And, when using it in arcade mode, you can't throw a fast-ball (I've tried everything and can't do it). I've also played innings where it took longer to load the game between innings than it did to actually play it! As in Konami's Bottom of the Ninth, I like the icon-driven hitting and pitching mechanics, but they're not as fluid as those found in BON. Don't get me wrong, they're still very good, just not AS good. Other annoyances include the, now classic, "fielders who switch throwing hands and glove hands" dur-

ing play, and left-handed shortstops.

In the end, other than the slow speed of play, I can't point my finger at any one thing in MLB Pennant Race that makes it less than a Gold game. However, I just haven't enjoyed my time with the game enough to give it the big prize (Triple Play received a Gold/92% in our July, 1996 issue) and that, in and of itself, is enough to knock MLB Pennant Race from the top shelf. As much as I was looking forward to the game, and it IS a good game, Triple Play is more fun to play and remains our baseball game of choice.

Dave



THE BOTTOM LINE

I can't point my finger at any one thing in MLB Pennant Race that makes it less than a Gold game. However, I just haven't enjoyed my time with the game enough to give it the big prize (Triple Play received a Gold/92% in our July, 1996 issue) and that, in and of itself, is enough to knock MLB Pennant Race from the top shelf.

89%



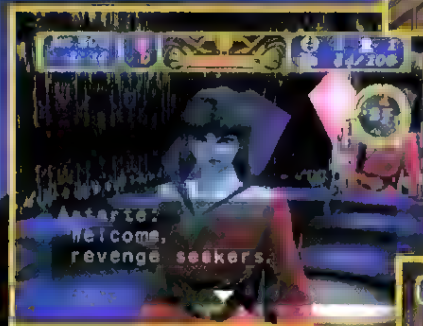
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 - b) Some of the intruders.
 - c) Just the intruders you don't like.
 - d) Just the intruders who piss you off (like Yuri's).
 - e) Most of the above.
2. How are you going to trap and kill the intruders?
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 - b) Crush them with the Stomp.
 - c) Zap them with the Volt Cage.
 - d) Use Mind Kill.
 - e) Most of the above.
3. What are you seeking?
 - a) Revenge.
 - b) Vengeance.
 - c) Redemption.
 - d) Acquittal.
 - e) All of the above.
3. Are you really...
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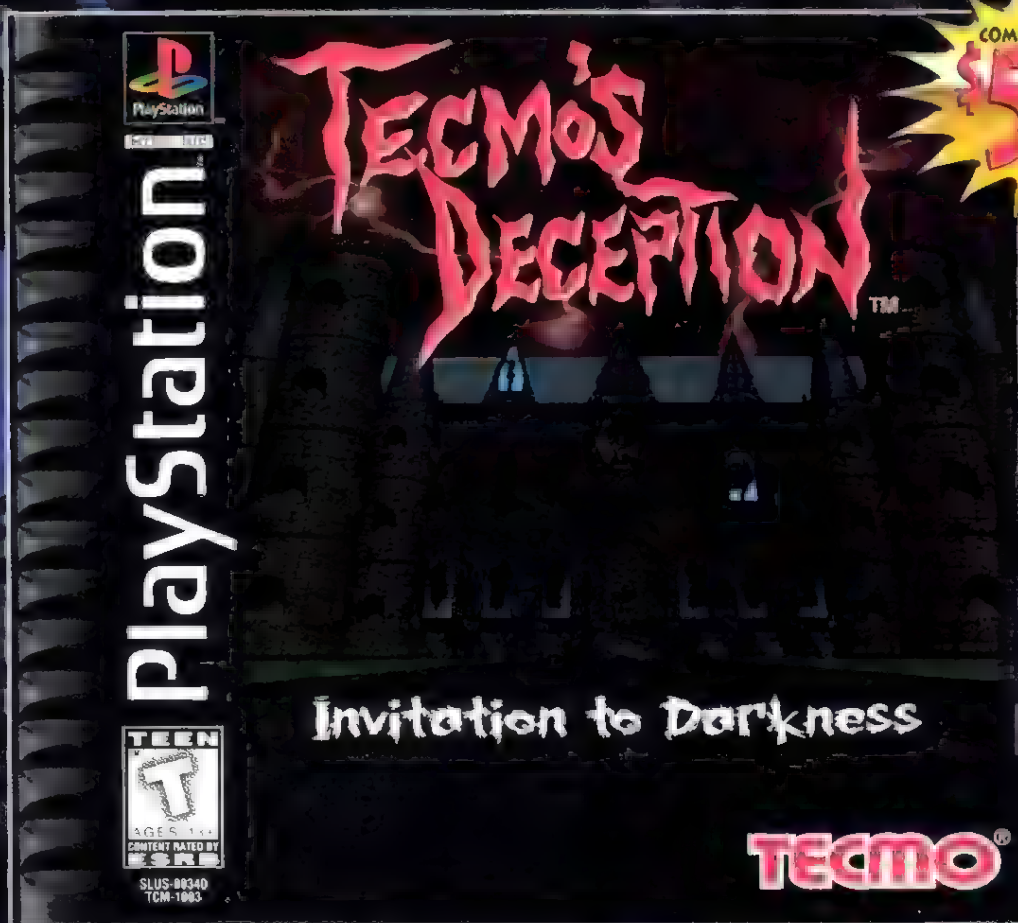
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BUBSY 3D

PUBLISHED BY ACCOLADE DEVELOPED BY EIDETIC

I will freely admit that I was not a big fan of the Bubsy series, Accolade's entry into the 16-bit character game sweepstakes. Although I thought the character itself was hilarious, the gameplay was stiff and unresponsive and the critical press, and consumer alike, greeted the game with a collective "enhhhh".

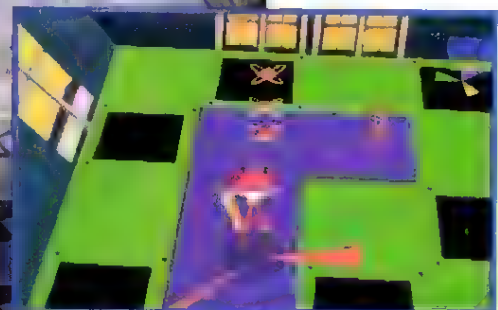
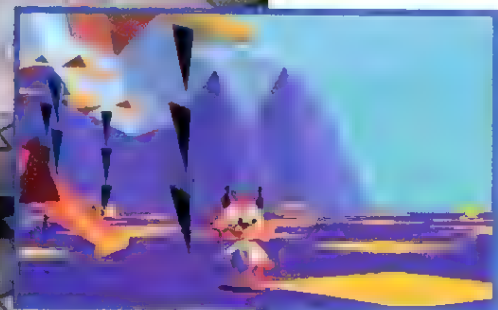
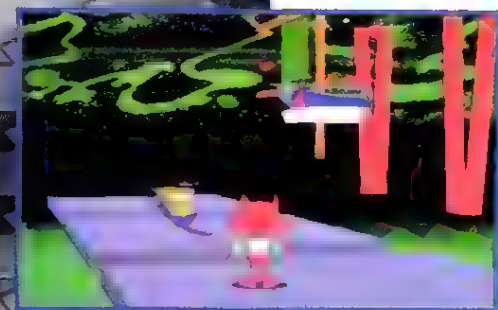
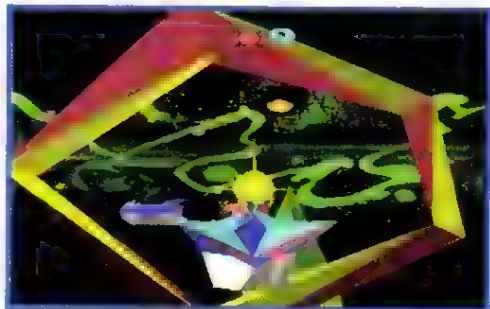
Ah, but as the song goes: "That was then, this is now." Bend, Oregon based Eidetic, a group consisting of a number of former Accolade employees and lovers of all that is rural, have taken their favorite Lynx and moved him into the hallowed grounds of the PlayStation, and its awe-inspiring high-resolution mode. In the process they have created what looks to be one of the sleeper hits of '96, an ode to classic platform action, and an animation style that is pure Warner Brothers (with music to match) — all presented in real-time 3D.

The basics of "Bubsy is 3D in Fur Bitten Planet" (Bubsy 3D for those of us who are word-limited and attention-span challenged) involve Bubsy crash-landing his rocket ship on a hostile, Woolie (Bubsy's arch-nemesis that has been carried over into the 32-bit world) and friends-infested world. The Woolies

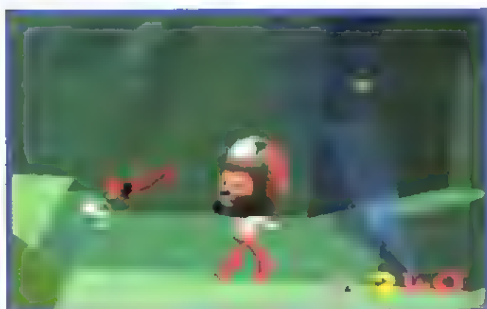
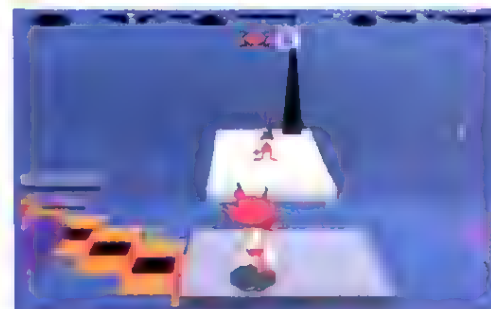
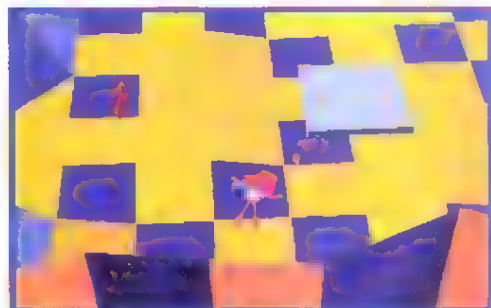


believe that Bubsy is the devil-incarnate and they set into motion some nasty plans for hastening the demise of the orange fur-ball. Bubsy's challenge is to gather the 32 pieces of his rocket, assemble them, and leave with his tail still attached. The player attempts to accomplish this over 16 different areas and by beating two different bosses.

The task isn't easy. There are Woolies, Wooies, Zzots and other forms of nastiness everywhere you turn in Bubsy 3D, and the levels are HUGE in both volume and area. It is the level design, in fact, that makes Bubsy 3D a great game. Without giving too much away, I will give you one small example. In level 3 (Catatomic Catastrophe), you must negotiate a series of platforms suspended over water (and we all know how cats LOVE water), fire an atom (your weapon of choice in B3D — collect 150 of them in a level and its Bonus Round time) at a suspiciously-different colored wall next to a waterfall, break through the wall, negotiate the moving platforms in this room — above a black and white checkerboard floor that boots you out of the room should you accidentally fall and touch it, and up to the highest platform in the room ... just to get the FIRST of two rocket parts in the level!



EXTRATED



Acquiring the second part involves climbing platforms, over water, to a warp platform that sends you to a secret area of the level — where you must commandeer a boat, but I will say no more.

The game is full of stuff like this and the long-term play value is exceptional. Graphically, Bubsy 3D is completely unique and unlike any other platform game you may have played. The high-res visuals and large volume spaces really make the game look like a WB cartoon and the music falls right in line and helps make the character of Bubsy come to life (although I found his voice to be a little irritating). Play control takes a little bit of getting used to, in that the world pivots around

your character. But, after a few minutes, you'll be flying, side-stepping, jumping, head-bouncing and atom-firing with the best of them. On the negative side, Bubsy's voice is definitely an "acquired taste". For me, it grates on my nerves, but the good news is that he's kind of like a color commentator — he only comments on the big stuff. The other problem, typical of this kind of game presentation, is that, on occasion, you will find yourself in a place where the camera can't quite figure out what to do. This can be remedied, however, by taking control of Bubsy's vision and realigning yourself (you can do this while moving — not while shooting) Oh, did I mention that there is a two player game? Although not a full-blown game in and of itself, two players can grab controllers and fight it out, through atom shooting, to gain control over Bubsy and score the most points ... pretty cool and a nice little "freebie".

And there you have it: beautiful graphics, great tunes, solid gameplay, unique style, a little puzzle solving, and surprisingly deep, thoughtful gameplay add up to an experience that no action/platform gamer should miss.

Dave



THE BOTTOM LINE

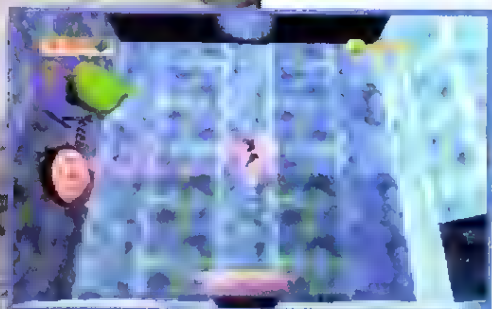
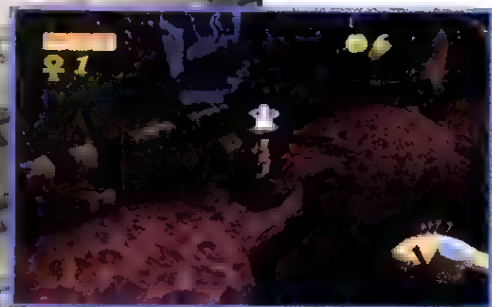
And there you have it: beautiful graphics, great tunes, solid gameplay, unique style, a little puzzle solving, and surprisingly deep, thoughtful gameplay add up to an experience that no action/platform gamer should miss.

93%



PANDEMONIUM!

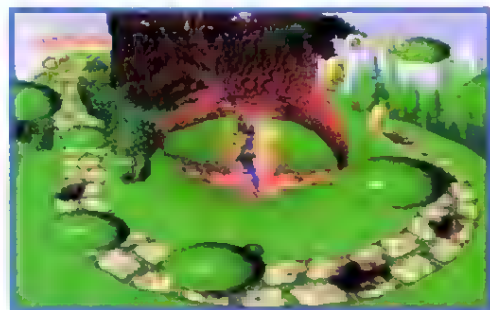
DESIGNED BY CRYSTAL DYNAMIX



As a young fella who appreciates the art of game creation almost as much as the games themselves — you know how it is, every actor wants to direct, every game reviewer wants to design — it's been fun to watch the pros tackle the harder-than-you-think task of translating the action/platform genre into the three-dimensional world, and even more fun to play the fruits of their collective labors. Fade to Black, Jumping Flash's 1 and 2, and Sony's inimitable non-mascot, Crash Bandicoot — all are great fun to look at AND to play. Now, we have the latest crack at the genre from Toys For Bob, a development team for whom I have borderline-religious awe; they've created great games for over a decade, including Mail Order Monsters, Archon, Star Control 1 and 2, and the very underrated The Horde (which Crystal Dynamics released for the Saturn, but not the PlayStation — it ain't fair, I tell ya). Pandemonium! has Toys For Bob's slightly twisted sense of humor on full display, starting with the opening intro. We watch as Nikki, a wizard's apprentice, casts magical spells for the

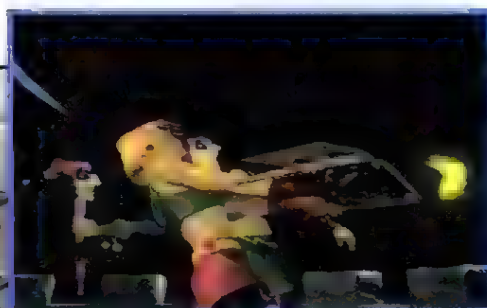
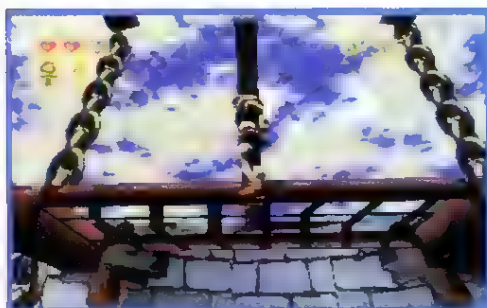
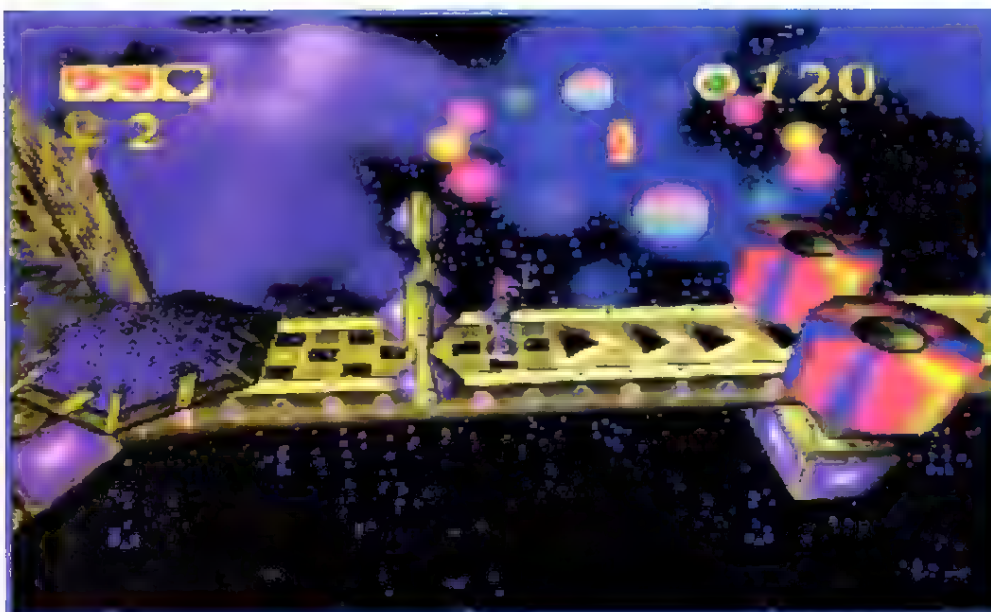
jester who is inseparable from his puppet-on-a-stick, Sid. Nikki decides to push the envelope and cast a tenth-level spell, conjuring up a giant monster that scarfs down an entire castle in one big gulp. "That was fun — horrible, but fun," remarks Fargus. Now, to get rid of the beast, the mismatched pair have to trek to the Wishing Engine and wish for the creature to disappear. And, conveniently enough for gameplay purposes, the Engine is 18 levels and three bosses away. Pandemonium!'s approach to 3D is similar to Crash Bandicoot in that both games lock the player into a linear path. If anything, it's even stricter than Crash; our beloved bandicoot has a small degree of left-and-right movement, but the characters in Pandemonium! are bolted onto a path from which they cannot stray. When you push right, you run farther into the level; when you push left, you run back toward the start. Pandemonium! is very old-school in its gameplay; this is action/platform at its purest, as the goal is to finish each checkpoint-laden level while collecting coins to rack up extra lives. (Grab enough coins and you get to play one of two incredibly psychedelic bonus rounds to earn even more extra lives.) There are a few semi-puzzles in each level, mostly involving keys and doors to progress farther into the level, but it's mostly jumping and shooting. Each character has a skill which makes him or her better for certain levels: Nikki can jump higher than Fargus, and Fargus has a tumbling move that lets him smash through enemies without taking damage. (Nikki has to bounce their heads if she's

EXTRA!



gorgeous, combining high-res 2D backdrops (which, sadly, have no parallax scrolling) with a 3D polygon foreground that scales, rotates, and constantly provides the most dramatic, and playable, view of the action; the "camera" in Pandemonium! is ALWAYS moving, and it's the spectacular visuals that raise the game to Gold status. Crystal Dynamics initially promised that Nikki and Fargus' voices would be supplied by "two of the nation's hottest stand-up comics," but unless Helen Keaney and Greg Proops have TV sitcoms I don't know about, that promise went unfulfilled. Even without a comedy background, the pair do a fine job voicing the numerous smart-ass sound bites, which the characters mutter during gameplay, a la GEX. The sound effects are weak; I especially don't like the jumping effect, which is an annoying rubberbandy noise that gets more grating the longer you play. (It's in keeping with the light and bouncy spirit of the game, I guess.) The music, by Burke Treischmann, has the goofy-yet-upbeat flavor similar to his tunage from The Horde and the 3DO flop Captain Quazar, and it suits each level perfectly; he's quickly become one of my favorite gaming music composers. In the end, you can't argue with the traditional, Sonic-style gameplay and the 3D graphics are breathtaking. With Pandemonium!, Crystal Dynamics has firmly embarked on the comeback trail and has given gamers one of 1996's most unique titles.

Zach



without a weapon.) Ah, yes, the weapons: there are power-ups that grace Nikki and/or Fargus with fireballs, a shrink ray (my personal favorite), and a freeze ray. But, if the gameplay is tried and true, the graphics are bleeding-edge



THE BOTTOM LINE

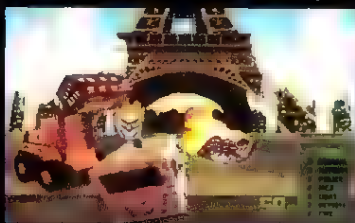
In the end, you can't argue with the traditional, Sonic-style gameplay and the 3D graphics are breathtaking. With Pandemonium!, Crystal Dynamics has firmly embarked on the comeback trail and has given gamers one of 1996's most unique titles

93%

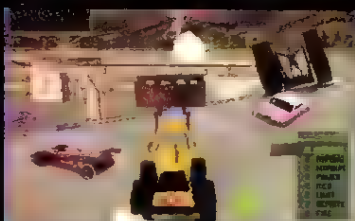


TWISTED METAL

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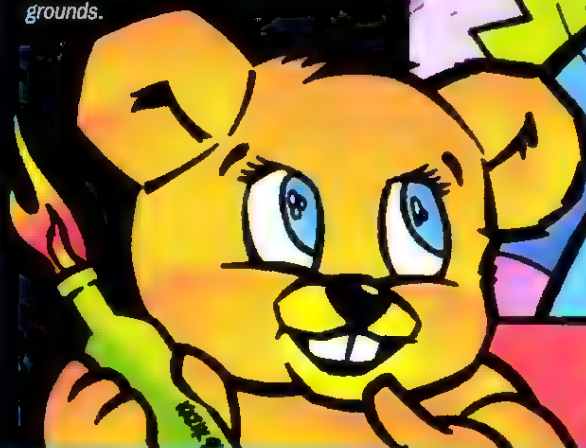
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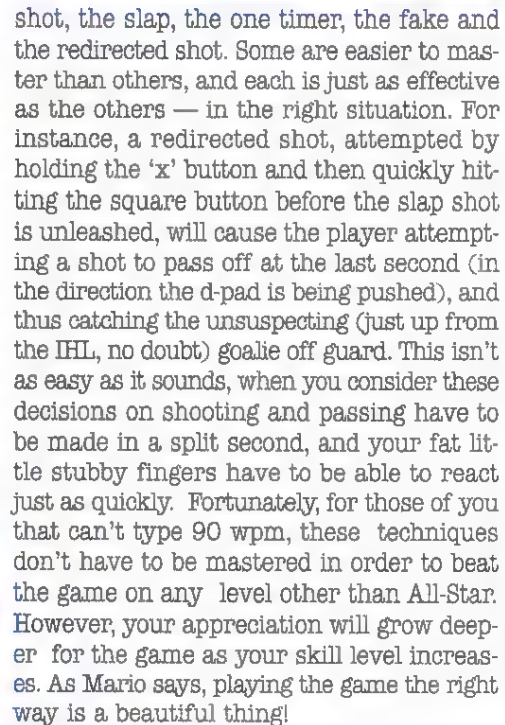
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PLAYER CARDS

99

New York

Waves: 67

Overall: 86

Pitching: 89

Speed: 80

Strength: 80

Pitching Accuracy: 80

Pitching Control: 80

Pitching Speed: 80

Pitching Power: 80

Pitching Range: 80

Pitching Time: 80

Pitching Weight: 80

Pitching Handiness: 80

Exit Stats Teams Players

EXTRAILED



musical accompaniment that made the atmosphere somewhat carnival like in the previous version. In addition, the penalties are more clearly marked in blue, whereas last year (pink) they tended to blend into the ice, what with the pink circles and all.

All in all, there isn't much that I would change had I developed this game myself, although I would throw in hats for a trifecta, and the opposing team shouldn't be celebrating so enthusiastically when they score a goal and still trail by five or six! The computer AI is nails on All-Star level, and they move the puck as if they were the old Boston Bruins that featured the "Kraut Line" (a box of leftover video game stuff (good and bad) to the first one to e-mail all three players' names!). The absolute mayhem that occurs as bodies get checked into the penalty box, literally, and pucks zoom into the stands is unreal! Add to that the sound of the puck deflecting off of the pipes, and you have a gaming experience unrivaled in the world of video game sports. Sony continues to stake their claim as the leader in sports games on the Playstation, and with NHL Face Off '97, they have the premier hockey title. The clash of the titans rages on!

Now how do all the changes and enhancements of NHL Face Off '97 stack up to the latest offering from EA, you ask? Well, I'll let you read about that in the next couple of pages, but suffice it to say, they are two completely different games with their own individual styles of game play. So read on, you demented Playstation owner, and find out what the truth really is!

doesn't have the constant

Eric



"Whalers goal by Brendan Shanahan, assisted by Kevin Dineen". However, if the Whalers are playing at home, the announcer becomes more animated with "Whalers goal by... BRENDAAAAAN SHANA-HAAAAAAN!!!!!" - now is that cool or what? And just wait until you hear how he draws out some of the names - my favorite is Ooooo-wen Nooooolaaaaaan (of course, you generally can't go wrong with the names ending in -sov or -kov either!). Some of the other changes in '97 reflect a more realistic feel to the control of the individual players. The players don't stop as quickly as they did in '96, and checking doesn't seem to be as easy - the players just don't crumble when you give 'em a forearm shiver like they used to! Which brings us to fighting — yes we got fighting in '97, but let me tell ya, the computer always seems to go after my star players, and every once in awhile you'll end up with 17 minutes in the box! Of course, if you play with injuries 'on' you could lose a player for the entire season (which I have — the league leader in goals and points — "M. Winding" of all people). Also, compared to last year, '97



THE BOTTOM LINE

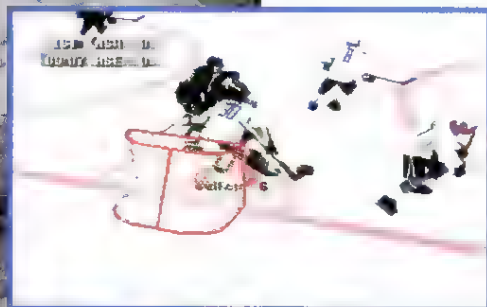
Sony continues to stake their claim as the leader in sports games on the Playstation, and with NHL Face Off '97, they have the premier hockey title. The clash of the titans rages on! ... Now how do all the changes and enhancements of NHL Face Off '97 stack up to the latest offering from EA, you ask? Well, I'll let you read about that in the next couple of pages...

98%



NHL 97

PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY EA SPORTS



If you just finished reading the review of NHL Face Off '97 on the previous page, then you already know that I gave it a 98% and awarded it King of the hockey titans. Thus, you quickly turned the page and glanced down at the score below and saw an 89%. A solid mark, for sure, almost Gold, but maybe a bit less than you anticipated? Here's why...

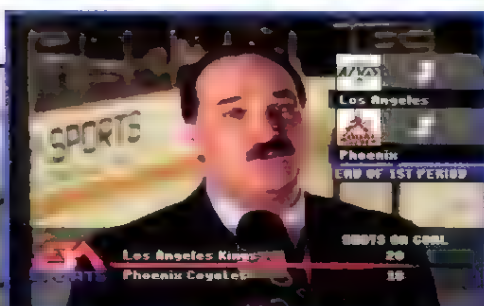
First of all, let me start by saying that there's an awful lot to like with EA's NHL '97, and it starts from the moment you feast your eyes on the coolest intro to grace the start of any video game, let alone sports title. EA has used almost TV production quality video, not unlike something you would see on Monday Night Football. Add to that Jim Brown from Fox in the "studio" doing the pre game analysis and John Davidson rink-side providing the in-between period recap, and you've got a pretty theatrical presentation. There's also a play-by-play announcer, instant replay, and incredible camera angles to complement the affair. Next — have you noticed the full size polygon players and the numbers on the back, and logos on the front, of the players' jerseys? Those are some waytoocool features,

as are the abilities to create players and do trades. Of course, some of this is standard Playstation hockey fare, but you gotta sweat the details, right? Right. Enough praise, already, let's get to why this is an 89% and Face Off is a 98%, shall we? It's quite simple, really, even after you strip away all the flair and style that is inherent in NHL '97. It just boils down to the fun factor — that's it. And fun is derived from the satisfaction you get from CONTROLLING the action, and I'm here to say that NHL '97 just isn't as fast, crisp, accurate, or as enjoyable as is its counterpart from Sony.

When you break it down, the two games are really quite different in how they are played, vis a vis the time and speed element. For example, in Face Off, the passing is cat-like quick, where getting the puck to the open player takes skill and coordination. With EA, the passes crawl across the ice like somebody put Elmer's on the bottom of the biscuit. And half of the time, with your pass lingering in the center of the ice, your opponent just breezes on by and takes it away. I often find myself watching the action, rather than reacting to it! More on control? How about your computer teammates who seem to lapse into daydreams as the com-



EXTRATED



puter players chase down a loose puck, or the fact that, when you try to switch to the closest guy to the puck, that player is usually headed in the wrong direction, and by the time you turn him around, the computer opponent is in your zone lining up a rocket to fire into the basket (you knew it was coming, right? Biscuit ... basket).

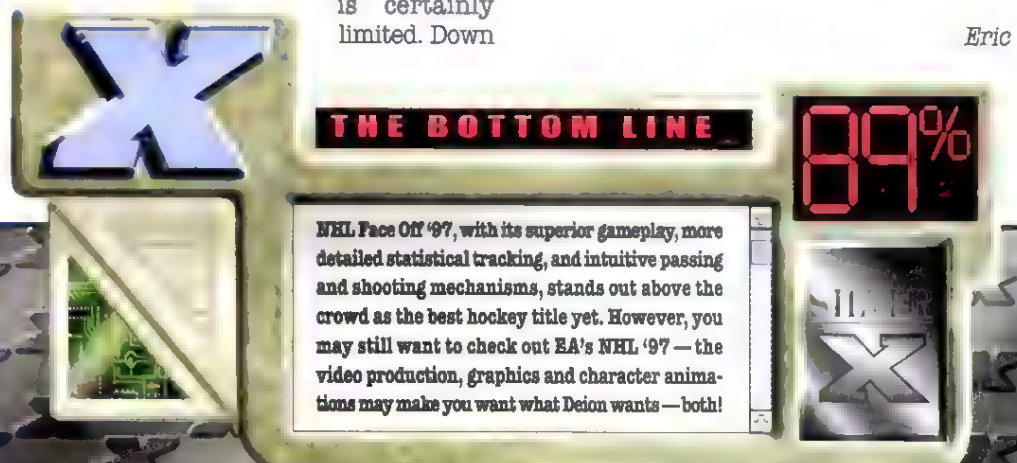
Another area that irks me is the time consideration. Like NHL Face Off, NHL '97 allows you to choose from 5, 10, or 20 minute periods. However, a ten minute period from Sony lasts about 6-1/2 minutes, where a five minute period from EA lasts just as long, if not longer. What's the big deal? Well, if you look at it from a minor penalty standpoint, Mr. Lindros could spend 40% of a period in the box in NHL '97, while that same penalty from Face Off would amount to only 20% (still high, but better) — go ahead, do the math. Fighting would put you out for the entire five minute period! Of course, I've yet to see a fight in NHL '97, but the instructions say it can happen. Heck, Sony has at least four or five fights every game. As mentioned earlier, EA has included an announcer, but his vocabulary

is certainly limited. Down

a man? Score anyway? The NHL Face Off announcer will say "Sharks goal. A power play goal by Jeff Freisen". The NHL '97 dude just says "goal by Jeff Freisen". Same goes for a hat trick, EA doesn't even recognize it! Bummer. On the positive spin, though, I like the fact that EA gives you statistical updates (just like on TV) before each face-off. The animation from the polygon characters is simply fantastic — just wait until you see a player get crushed and then do a full flip in the air! Oh, and helmet cam — unbelievable! Too bad it isn't a feasible long term playing angle, but heck, for a few seconds, it's darn right incredible. Of course, you won't look face to face with a ref, 'cause, unlike Face-off, there isn't one to be found on the ice in NHL '97.

The Bottom Line? NHL Face Off '97, with its superior gameplay, more detailed statistical tracking, and intuitive passing and shooting mechanisms, stands out above the crowd as the best hockey title yet. However, you may still want to check out EA's NHL '97 — the video production, graphics and character animations may make you want what Deion wants — both!

Eric



25 grisly minutes of full motion 3D animation. Slaughter your enemies as a Vampire then morph to a wolf, escaping into the dead of night.

Butcher villagers or turn them into festering pools of decaying flesh with one of 22 demented magics. It will take you more than 100 hours of adventure to destroy those who damned you, but you'll get them. Every last bloody one



LEGACY OF KAIN

Forever-a black and
dreadful place. Where
the undead feast on
the living to survive.

ETERNAL DAMNATION LEAVES PLENTY OF TIME TO PLAN YOUR REVENGE

Welcome to Crystal
Dynamics Blood
Omen: Legacy of Kain.
Whether you choose
the body of man, the
form of wolf or the cloak
of mist, the search for
and annihilation of
those who damned you
is your only purpose.

"So cool you won't want to
play it alone in the dark."

—PSX

"...this is the largest game
world I've ever seen in an
adventure console game."

—PSExtreme

"The most ambitious
adventure game ever
created awaits."

—Game Fan



Explore the carnage at www.crystal-dynamics.com

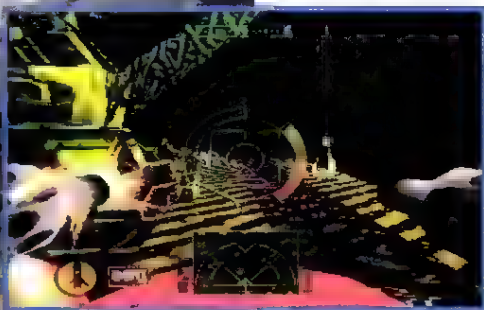
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**CRYSTAL
DYNAMICS**

MACHINE HEAD

PUBLISHED BY EIDOS DEVELOPED BY CORE

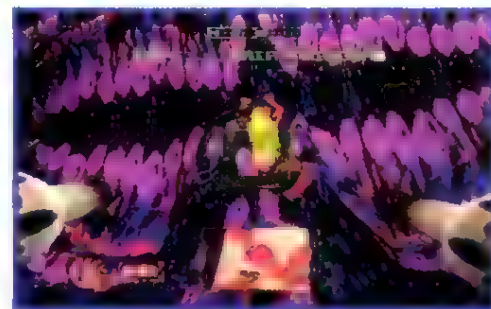


the war-head on a deadly kamikaze mission into the heart of the MachineHead virus.

The game is played out in huge, enemy infested, texture-mapped 3D levels, that encompass both inside and outside environments. Each level is mission-based, meaning you have certain objectives you must fulfill, in a certain order, to move on to the next. The vehicle you're strapped to is equipped with two heavy barrel machine guns on either side (looking, but not playing, a little bit like Psygnosis' lukewarm shooter *Krazy Ivan*) and can also unleash a barrage of special weapons, from homing missiles to plasma cannons, which can either be found strewn throughout each level or are rewarded randomly as you kill the various nasties that the MachineHead has created to stop you.



EXTRATED



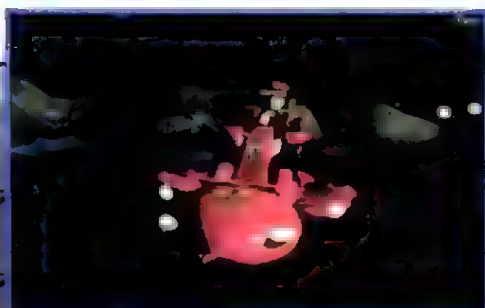
airborne enemies that require you to shoot upwards). The "triangle" button cycles through your available weapons and the "L1 and R1" buttons fire your machine guns and special weapons. Lastly, the "L2 and R2" buttons are used to strafe (there are a total of six different selectable control options available.)


The graphics in the game are suitably dark and gritty. If there was an award given for best use of the lens flare effect, MachineHead would win hands-down. Some of the explosions and special effects have to be witnessed to be believed and the enemies in the game are beautifully-rendered, grotesque polygon characters (how's that for an oxymoron?) The sound effects perfectly suit the game's dark and nasty atmosphere to a "t" and, what seems to be a standard in this day and age, the music is fast and furious techno. If I had one complaint, regarding the graphics, it would be the polygon break-up that occurs when you get too close to a wall.

My experience with MachineHead has been a good one indeed. Although there are plenty of 3D shooters available for the PlayStation, MachineHead stands out in the crowd, with a unique 3D engine, cool character design, great gameplay, and a long quest ... Definitely worth the purchase.

Greg

The control scheme feels just right, with the "square" and "X" buttons being forward and reverse, respectively and the "D" pad turning your vehicle left and right, as well as looking up and down (which must be utilized quite a bit as there are numerous






THE BOTTOM LINE

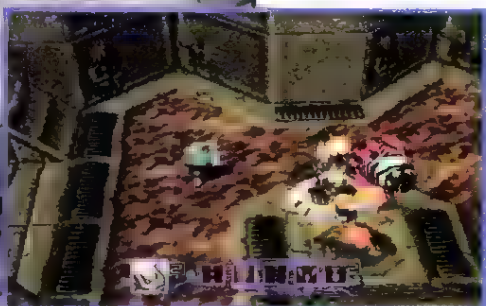
My experience with MachineHead has been a good one indeed. Although there are plenty of 3D shooters available for the PlayStation, MachineHead stands out in the crowd, with a unique 3D engine, cool character design, great gameplay, and a long quest ... Definitely worth the purchase.

99%



CONTRA: LEGACY OF WAR

PUBLISHED BY KONAMI - DEVELOPED BY APPALOOSA



What makes a fun game? Is it awesome graphics? Is it outstanding sound? Or is it something more simple ... like gameplay? Well for me, gameplay is "where it's at" (to quote Beck). Sure those other things make a game more appealing, but it is gameplay that keeps you sitting in front of your TV, endlessly trying to get to the next level. Well, coming soon to a PlayStation near you, compliments of Konami, is yet another addition to the long running series dubbed "Contra".

If, for some odd reason, someone out there hasn't heard of, or played, any of the number of Contras, allow me to fill you in. Basically you pick a character, then attempt to blast your way through numerous missions, collecting arsenal-altering power-ups (come on, new guns, sheesh!) and try to kill as many enemies as possible. Let me tell you, Konami graciously makes sure there are always a lot of bad gu ... ahem ... people to aim at. In this new addition to the Contra family, you have the option to select any of four different characters. Each char-

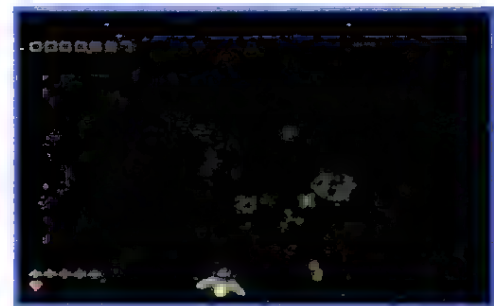
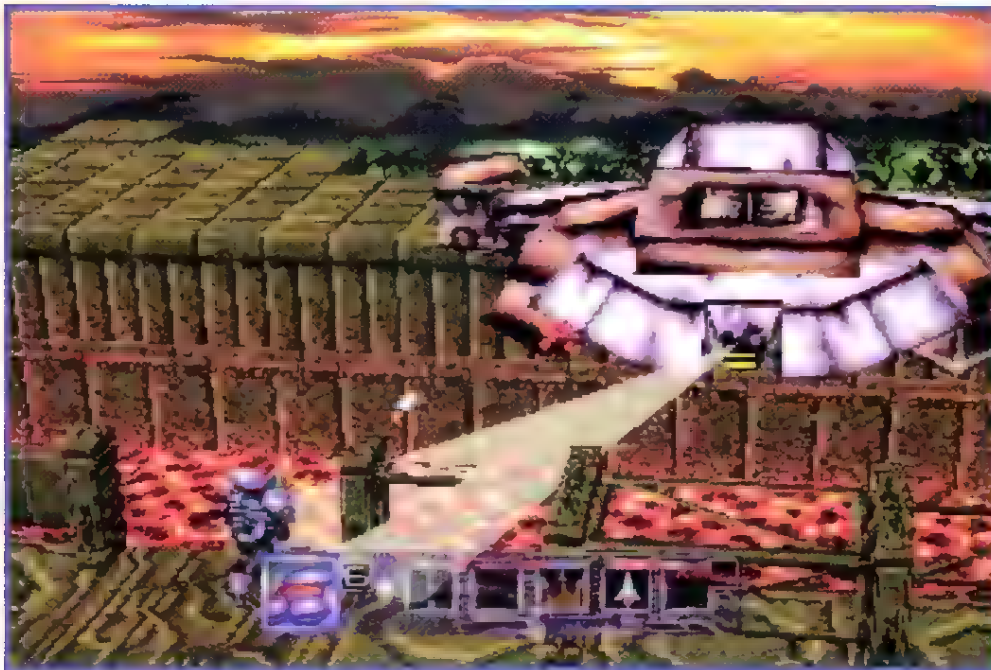
acter has different abilities, and can gain different special weapons as the game progresses.

As I mentioned in the opener, the gameplay is what makes Contra a great game. The difficulty levels are perfect. The game is just hard enough to keep you playing over and over, but not too difficult — as to where you throw the controller down in frustration and give up forever. The only major problem is that, if your character takes damage, he/she immediately loses a life, kinda uncool when you only have seven lives to start with on Hard. It would have been nice to see some form of energy bar where you could take a few hits before losing a life, but hey, that's been the standard in the Contra series all along. So why change now?

As you progress through each level, it will be your duty to explore building walls, to find hidden stashes of items ranging from weapon upgrades, to extra lives, to invincibility shields. Levels, for the most part, are a combination of side-scrolling and 3rd-person 3D. Other unique styles include scaling a enemy hideout, and navigating



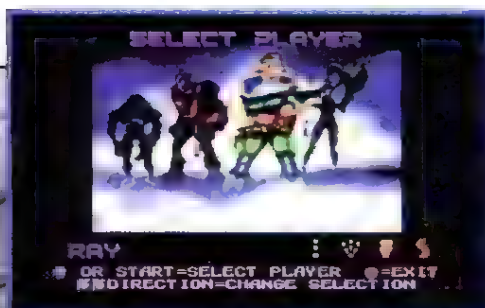
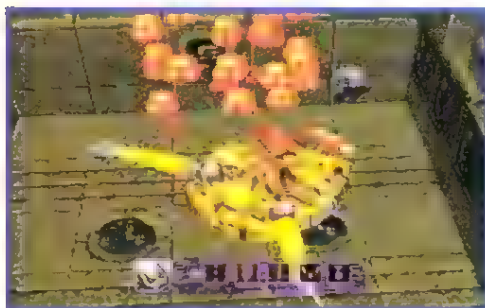
EXTRATED



streets and jungles, you can't help but to be impressed with the detail and effort Konami put into this game. My only major gripe concerning visuals is the way the characters look. They look a bit too 2D for me, but you forget that, once you concentrate on getting through the levels. As for the audio, Contra is amazing. The background music is nothing short of perfect. It fits each level perfectly and pumps you up as you progress through a level. The sound effects could have used a bit of touching up, as they sound a bit bland, but you only notice it when you think about it.

Ben's Breakdown: Over the years, game players have come to expect nothing but fun from the Contra Series and 'Legacy of War' is no exception. With decent graphics and sound effects, great music, and classic run-and-gun gameplay, this game will have you hooked after just a few minutes. If you like fun games, I definitely recommend Contra: I bestow thee "Gold".

Ben



a boat through treacherous waters.

The overall appearance of the game is very good. Each level has different 3D polygon backgrounds that are a nice addition to the tight gameplay.

As you run through city



THE BOTTOM LINE

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90%



NASCAR RACING

PUBLISHED BY SIERRA

DEVELOPED BY PAPYRUS

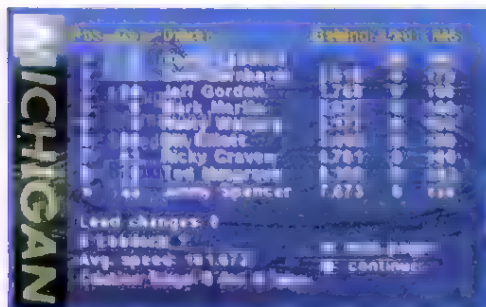
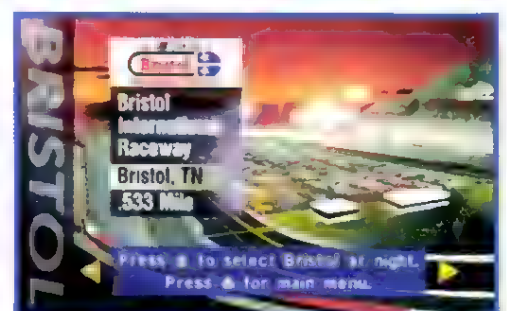
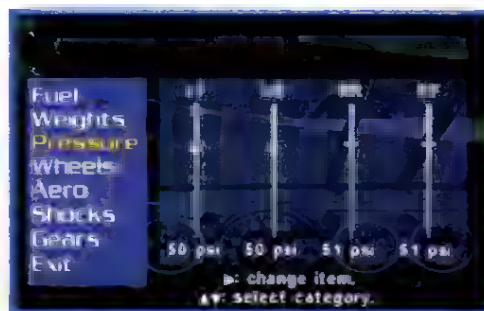
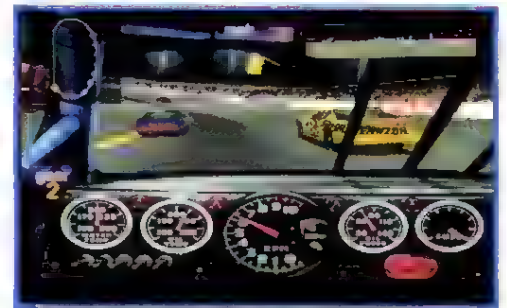


only pure Stock Car racer currently available. It includes the '96 drivers, teams, sponsors (sorry, no Foster's Lager) and the opportunity to compete on 16 actual NASCAR tracks. Three of the tracks are available for a little night time action. Additionally, there are a couple of fantasy tracks with multitudes of high banked turns. Consider them a nice break from the high pressure tracks of the actual season.

As I mentioned before, in an attempt to make the transition to the console world a little easier, the development team has added an arcade mode designed to make the racing experience a little more fun for the casual user. The arcade mode basically consists of different types of driving assistance designed to keep your car on the track and out of the walls. There is also a catch-up feature that basically adjusts the computers AI to the skill level of the gamer, so as not to make the game impossible to beat. For the purists out there, however, the simulation mode offers all of the realism we have come to expect from



EXPERIMENTAL



a Papyrus sim. First off, you have the ability to manipulate every element of the build out of the car, in order to get the maximum performance and, once you have customized the car to your specs, you will be able to drive with the same physical aspects of the real thing. Both modes offer multiple camera angles, including a very drive-able cockpit view.

What's the bottom line you say? Well, basically it boils down to this; good, but not great. You get a nice sensation of speed throughout the game, and there are enough tracks to keep you busy for quite some time.

The driving mechanics

are very easy to get comfortable with, but the repetition weighs heavily on your attention span. The soundtrack is the best in any racing game, bar none, and the cockpit view works very well. Unfortunately, the graphic presentation isn't up to the level of its competitors (Andretti Racing and F1), and the lack of any credible race commentary is inexcusable. If NASCAR Racing had come out a year ago, I'd be much more excited about the end result. As it stands, however, it just can't compete with the state-of-the-art, second generation titles already available.

Alex



THE BOTTOM LINE

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80%



DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

PUBLISHED AND DEVELOPED BY PSYGNOSIS



The original Destruction Derby was a technological wonder. It was also typical of the kind of game that you launch a new system with — heavy on graphics and visuals and a little lighter on the quality gameplay. Although many players complained about a perceived lack of control, no one complained about the originality of the “Wrecking Racing” concept or the pure enjoyment found in smashing the heck out of the other cars.

As all good sequels should, Psychosis' Destruction Derby 2 comes to us with faster animation and gameplay (30 frames per second), new tracks, much tighter control, new animations that include pieces of cars spewing all over the roadway, a head-banging metal soundtrack to go with the metal-shed and, overall, a much more polished, exciting product.

As with the original, the best action to be had is in the Wrecking Racing gameplay option. The Destruction Derby and Stock Car racing options are good, but WW is where you get to put BOTH your driving and smashing skills to the test, trying to score points by finishing in the highest position, AND, more importantly,

by bashing the crud out of your opponents. Some very cool things happen in this mode; like driving on two wheels and doing spinning 360's after getting air. There are seven different courses in Stock Car and Wrecking Racing modes (some can only be accessed by obtaining Division 1 or 2 status on the Championship circuit), plus four different arenas in Destruction Derby mode.

The gameplay emphasis is on the ‘wrecking’ part. I have competed in races where I finished first but, because of this, I had not accumulated very many Race Points. I ended up staying in Division 4 and finishing in 14th place, overall! Another time, I finished 13th, but ended up placing 7th, thanks to my 95 race points. Lastly; one time I didn't even finish the race, but I had 210 race points and finished in first. Obviously, being the fastest bunny is not the key to winning. In addition, players can play through multiple seasons, with each season ending up in a Destruction Derby arena. Speaking of DD, there are two forms of play in this mode; practice, where you smack cars until something blows on your car and Total Destruction, where your performance



EXTRA



cles. The monstrous stock cars handle like the beasts that they are, and the vehicle reaction to impact, tarmac landings, etc. is absolutely outstanding. Graphically, the game looks like last year, but with more of everything, including crossovers, pits (as in stop), jumps, etc. For those of you that owned a PlayStation last year, and played the original game, you will be blown away by the speed and detail of the new game. 'Newbies' will have to rent the first game to truly appreciate the improvements in the sequel.

With all of this destruction, speed, gameplay and options galore, this is one driving game that fans of the category will pull off of the shelf again and again over the coming year. Destruction Derby 2, along with the stellar Formula 1 and Wipeout XL have firmly established Psygnosis' dominance in racing games. It might stretch your pocket a little bit, but F1 and Wipeout XL are not enough ... if you love driving, then you gotta get Destruction Derby 2.

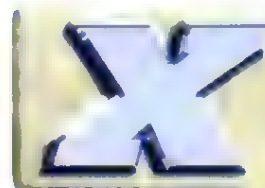
Dave



is based upon survival for as many ticks of the clock as you can hang on to see.

In terms of computer AI, there is a lot to like in Destruction Derby 2, but the core of the game is the detailed physical modeling

of the vehi-



THE BOTTOM LINE

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92%



NBA JAM EXTREME

PUBLISHED BY ACCLAIM - DEVELOPED BY SCULPTURED SOFTWARE

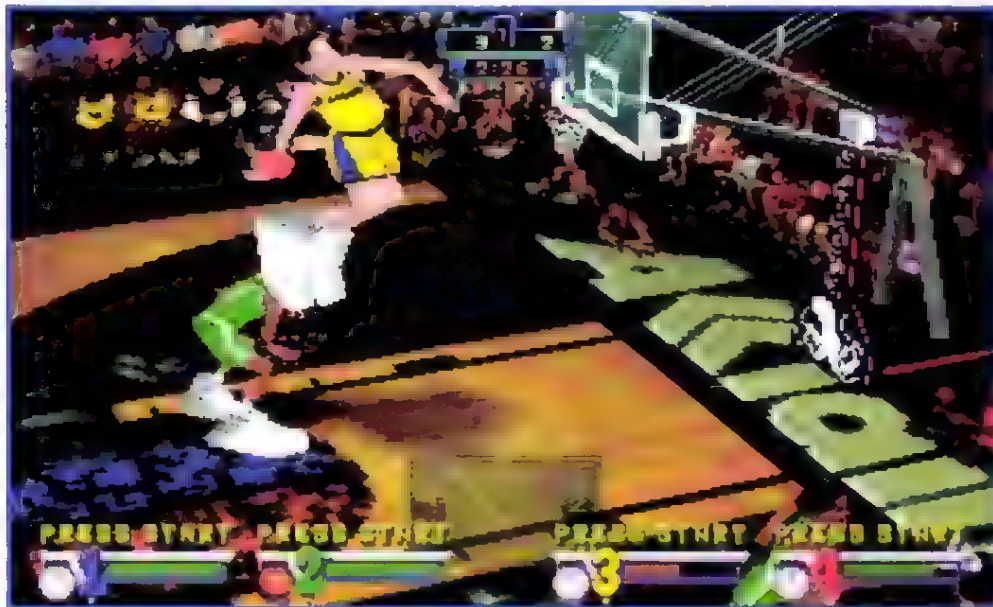
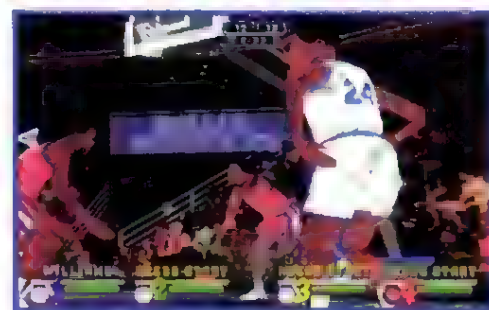


dimensional sprites to true 3D polygons. The new 3D players are also competing in a new world, as the courts are true 3D as well. The new look is actually quite impressive, as the shift to polygons has not slowed down the gameplay a bit. A little more realism was added by using the players actual NBA stats to help determine their skill level(s) in the game. All of the NBA teams are in here, along with play-by-play called by Marv Albert. If you're a fan of this series, you're going to be happy with the game, everything that you've come to expect from it is still here. It's still a two player, arcade-based game, with substitutions at the end of each quarter, and all the "special stuff". You know, the smoking sneakers, secret players, big heads, monster dunks, hot spots etc., etc., etc. So, with a nice mixture of old and new, the next logical question would be, what about the gameplay?

As I mentioned earlier, Extreme moves quite fast and the player animation is silky smooth. Passing has also been improved, to the point where even my lame-o friends look like "Magic".



EXTRAITED

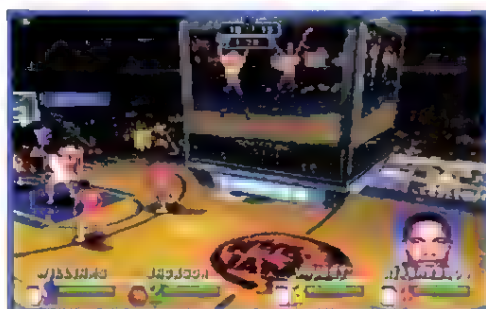


into the stands. This makes for some pretty aggressive grudge matches, as you will find yourself spending even more time trying to figure out how to spank your opponent than trying to score.

One other noticeable change is in the AI. If you played any of the previous versions of the game, you will undoubtedly recall that the computer would usually have an amazing burst of energy towards the end of the fourth quarter and come back from an overwhelming deficit to kick your butt in the last seconds of the game. Thankfully, this little "problem" does not exist in Extreme, the AI is very consistent throughout the game.

I've got to hand it to Acclaim, they took a very stale franchise and turned it into something rather new and exciting. Granted, the concept hasn't changed, but the look and the feel certainly have. Extreme is definitely the best in the NBA Jam series. The only thing keeping it off the coveted Gold list is the perennial sequel aspect of the series

Alex



Although the format of the game has remained in tact, it's a completely different game on the court. The game is much more physical than its predecessors, you can literally shove someone off the court and



THE BOTTOM LINE

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87%



PITBALL

THE NEW FUTURE SPORTS GAME OF THE YEAR



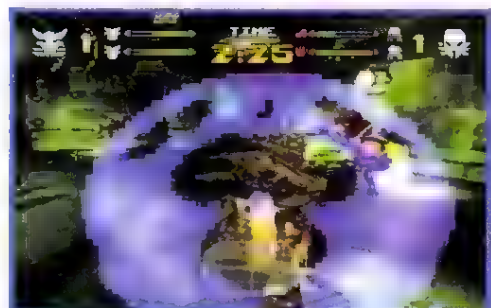
I'm a big (175 lbs. and fatter by the day — Italian girlfriends and their cooking will do that to you) fan of the "future-sport" game category, because it lets designers go crazy with concepts that would be awesome sports in real life, if only our puny late 20th-century technology were up to the task. Up to now, my fave future-sport game was Speedball, a computer game that shamelessly ripped off the 1970s flick Rollerball; now it's Pitball, a PlayStation game that rips off an idea from the 1980s flick Tron, while adding gameplay elements from fighting games and soccer games. It's a bizarre combination that somehow works beautifully.

So here's what Pitball be representin'. (Oh, yeah, I'm a homey, all right — if I were any whiter, I'd be albino.) There are four players (two on each team, with a choice of twelve teams from "across the galaxy") in a large, shallow pit with two tiny goals at opposite ends of it. Each player is wearing what looks like a 23rd-century ice cream scooper on his arm; he uses the scoop to grab the Pitball and throw it into the goal. Slight problem: the

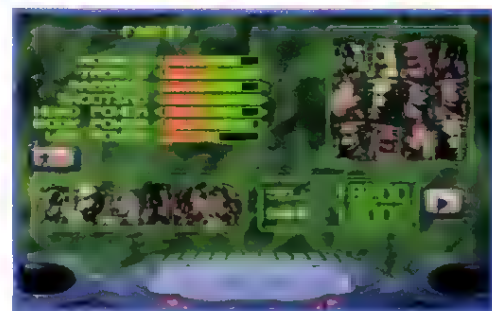
other team is trying to knock the player on his/her/its butt to get the Pitball. The aforementioned butt-knocking is done with one of several normal or special attack moves; you can swipe the other player with your scoop, jump into the air and bombard him with energy, or do a groovy, Ryu-style, flying uppercut, to name but three. During the match, the crowd tosses objects into the pit (which is pretty much what the fans do today, but I digress). Some of these are good power-ups that improve your performance or allow you to execute a super-cool, two-point or three-point "dunk"; others are naughty items like exploding mines that you can kick around the pit for several seconds before they go boom.

What I love the most about Pitball is the variety. You can choose a small, fast team and try to win with skillful shooting, or choose a big, brawny team and spend most of the match beating the hell out of your foes. (With twelve teams, there's a very healthy variety of attack moves to see and do.)

What I REALLY love the most about Pitball are the three funky-fresh play modes: a one-player tournament mode,



EXCITED



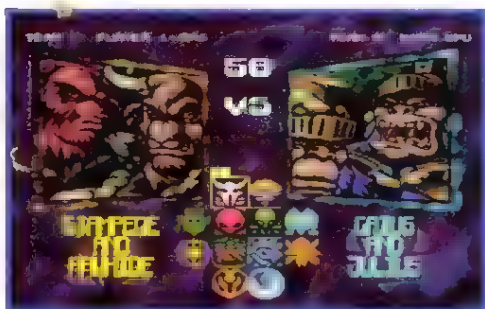
little setback. You can even let the computer play the games for you and concentrate exclusively on management, as you struggle to move your team from the third league (the equivalent of AA minor-league baseball) to the first (the Big Show). The seasonal mode gives Pitball as much depth as most real sports games — and it gives the game a huge amount of playability.

The graphics are excellent, but the players don't look quite as nice up close as the polygon characters in fighting games. (Then again, with four characters on-screen instead of two, the programmers probably had to sacrifice looks for speed.) And speaking of sacrifice, the three viewpoints of the pit have the usual sports-game trade-off: the closer you are to the action, the prettier the visuals — and the harder it is to play, because you can't see what the hey is going on.

The musical tracks are a mish-mash of moody techno tunes (several of which play during a match), and the sound effects are excellent — except for the VERY out-of-place announcer who shouts the winning team's name. (I think it's the voice of legendary boxing emcee Michael "Let's get ready to rum-buuuuh-le!" Buffer.)

I feel very comfy bequeathing (my big word for the issue) two large digits to Pitball; it's one of those rare games I know I'll be playing for months to come, just because there's so much strategy to learn beneath the simplistic surface.

Zach



a one-game match for two to four players, and a one-player seasonal mode that puts you into the role of player and manager; acquiring power-ups for your team, buying and selling players, and bribing opponents so they suffer a



THE BOTTOM LINE

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89%

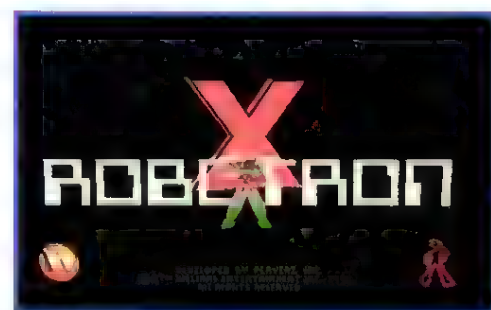


ROBOTRON X

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAMS/MIDWAY - DEVELOPED BY PLAYER 1

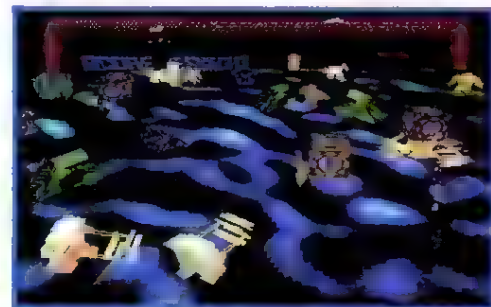
For me, Robotron X is the perfect shooter. When I was but a lad roaming the streets of Chicago in the mid 1980's, Robotron and the other classic Williams games were the main recipients of every last quarter I could scrounge, from every nook in every couch and dresser drawer in the house. I was one of those kids who stood in front of Robotron for 8 hours at a time, raking up scores that the machines couldn't even count, flipping the numbers back to zero up to 10 times in one game. I had to get good at the games... quarters were hard to come by in those days, so they had to last. There was a zone you got into playing Robotron that enabled you to pull off moves, weaving in and out of enemies, blasting a path to freedom that caused jaws to drop in disbelief. I loved Robotron so much, that when I finally started making something of my life and had a home of my own, I bought the the actual arcade machine.

I'm sure you can see why that, when I heard the Williams was finally making a modern sequel, I was all over it like you don't wanna know. I hounded the developers and begged and pleaded for an interview, pulled all the strings I had (stepping

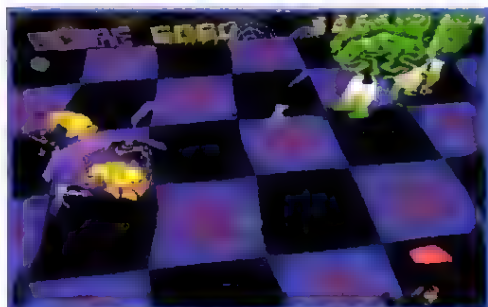
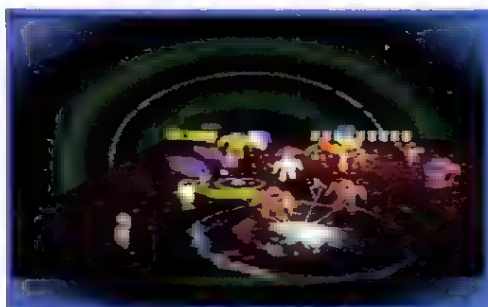
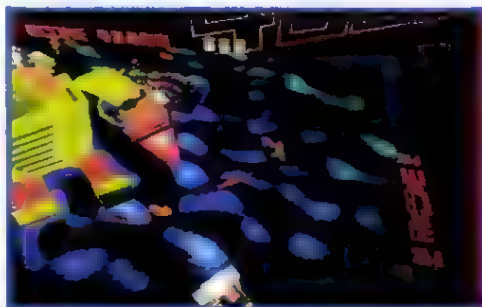
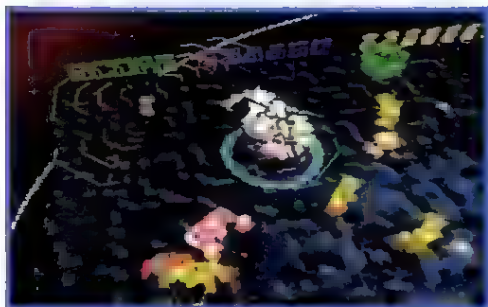
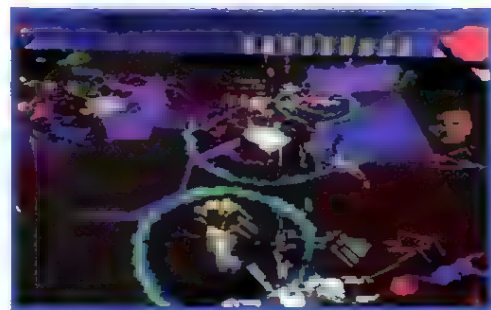
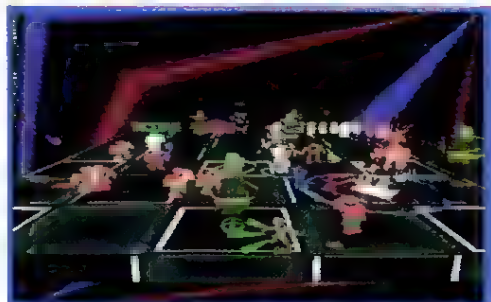


on a few toes at Williams in the process — sorry Andrew!) and got the scoop. I then proceeded to force my fellow workers to allow me to show at least a shot of the game in nearly every issue since.

Ahh, and what a magnificent sequel it turned out to be. Robotron X is everything a sequel should be. They've taken the game-play elements of the original Robotron: 2084 and expanded & enhanced them using the technical capabilities of today's technology, without losing sight of what made the original so good. When I finally got the 100% complete version, I freaked. You see, throughout the entire development cycle of the game, we were constantly updated on the progress, so I got to see it at every stage of development, from the first playable version, right on up the the final master. In all the previous builds, there was one serious problem; the camera. This was obviously the most challenging obstacle for the developers to overcome — taking the original 2D overhead game and translating it into a 3D environment, without losing the playability. The problem with 3D was that you couldn't see the entire playfield at once, which is critical to the strategies used in mastering the game. Enemies that were off



EXTRATED



camera would suddenly pop out of nowhere to kill you instantly. Miraculously, Player 1, with tons of input from Williams/Midway's gaming experts, were able to tweak the camera for the final version to make it work almost flawlessly. Needless to say, I was overjoyed and relieved when I popped it in the PlayStation and beheld the awesomeness of a totally playable 32-bit 3D Robotron. Not only was the camera fixed, but they added the option to play the game in an overhead view, wherein you could see about 90% of the playfield at once.

Enhancement wise, Robotron X is overflowing. There's new enemies galore and new weapons, which are acquired by grabbing powerups.

There's an unbelievable 200 levels which are no longer all just square rooms; there's octagonally shaped levels and levels that are floating rocket-powered platforms. There are bosses, there are bonus levels and secrets, oh my there are secrets. You may think that powerups are appearing randomly, well they're not *all* random. You can actually make powerups appear by doing certain controller combinations during gameplay. Try doing some Mortal Kombat moves on the controller, wonderful things will happen! Speaking of control, nothing has been overlooked in that department either. You can use just about any combination of control imaginable, including two controllers at once, and, the duel stick Sony controller works too!

They've crammed more enhancements into Robotron than a fiend like me could ever hope for, then they set it all to music that just pushes your mind over the top. RX bombards your brain with such a sensory overloading explosion of colors, furious speed, movement and sound that... well, have you ever read that first paragraph on the inside front cover of your game's manual?

Tim



THE BOTTOM LINE

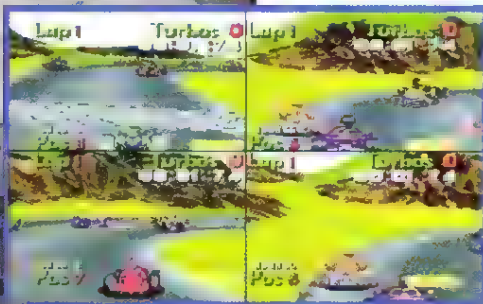
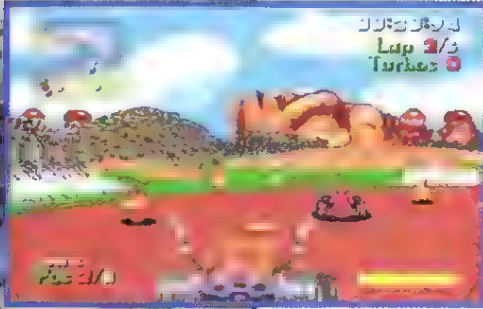
They've crammed more enhancements into Robotron than a fiend like me could ever hope for, then they set it all to music that just pushes your mind over the top. RX bombards your brain with such a sensory overloading explosion of colors, furious speed, movement and sound that... well, have you ever read that first paragraph on the inside front cover of your game's manual?

96%



STREET RACER

PUBLISHED BY UBI SOFT - DEVELOPED BY VIVID IMAGE

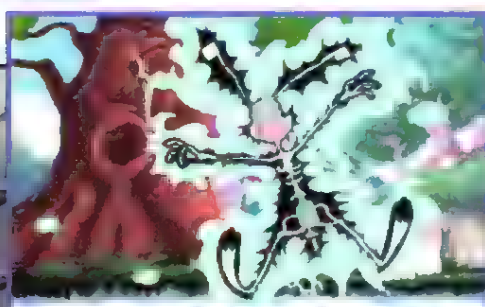


The game begins with character selection. You have a bunch to choose from and they all are rated in different categories: i.e. speed, handling — you get the picture. You also get to choose from an assortment of colors to give your character your own personal touch. Next, you choose your race options. Which shall you choose? Championship; a series of races in which your goal is to finish #1 in points, so as to advance to the next series; Head-2-Head, the obvious VS mode; or Practice, need I explain? Lastly, you choose which style competition: Race; regular race action or Rumble; an all out battle-royal where you go head-to-head with other players on a platform and try to knock your opponents off the edge. Race time!

Now, here's where the meat of my rating score comes into play. In any mode I chose, and however long I played it, the game was just plain not-fun. Gameplay is missing from this game, and I tried my hardest to find some. I tried Championship mode. I



EXCITED



played Rumble after Rumble. Heck, I even called up information and asked where the darned gameplay was. The lady said "Under your couch", but you know what? She was wrong! In any case, I made sure I played this game long and hard to be positive I wasn't missing anything. By looking at the screen shots, you might get the wrong impression. The game LOOKS good, but I can't tell you how annoying and poorly executed Street Racer is. "What about the audio" you ask me? It's plain, uninteresting, and uninspiring. The music is very repetitive, and the sound effects — well they

are average. In this day and age, you need to be a bit better than "O.K." to win me over.

Ohh yeah, when was the last time you had seven friends, eight controllers, two multitaps, a HUGE T.V., and enough bean dip to go around to play any 8 player game?

Unfortunately for us driving fans, Street Racer fails to deliver with any type of enjoyment factor. With below average gameplay, lack of decent audio, and missing any concept of originality, Street Racer is a sub-par driving game that should have remained in the 16-bit world.

Ben



THE BOTTOM LINE

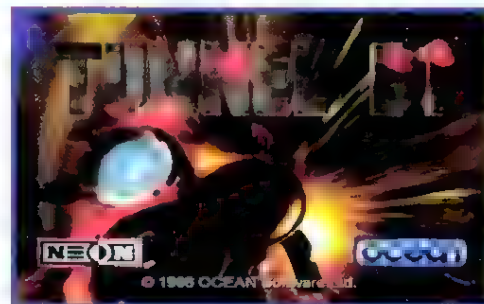
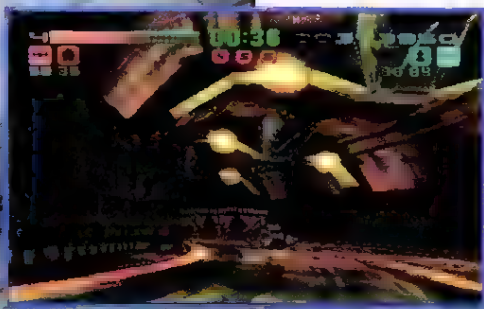
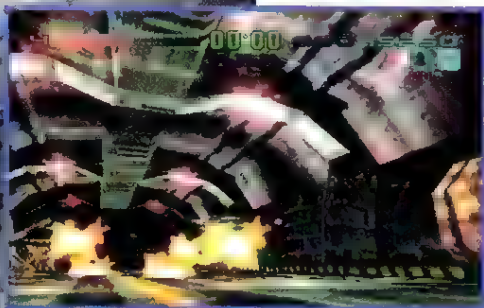
Unfortunately for us driving fans, Street Racer fails to deliver with any type of enjoyment factor. With below average gameplay, lack of decent audio, and missing any concept of originality, Street Racer is a sub-par driving game that should have remained in the 16-bit world

65%



TUNNEL B1

PUBLISHED BY ACCLAIM — DEVELOPED BY NEON



I've had my eye on Tunnel B1 since way back in April, when we originally did our preview of the game. Since then, it's had quite an interesting history, changing hands from one publisher to the next, until landing in the lap of the more than capable folks at Acclaim Entertainment. Back in April, when we first saw it, all we had was a video tape of early gameplay to go on, but, even at that point, we could tell that Tunnel B1 was going to be something special. Now that I've actually gotten my hands on it, and been able to play for extended periods of time, I can say, without a doubt, we were right on the money, the game kicks!

Tunnel B1 can be summarized as a fast-paced, futuristic 3D shooter where the key is survival. The story takes place on a post-apocalyptic Earth where an evil dictator has created the most heinous and dangerous weapon ever known to mankind. You're the pilot of the B1, a super-secret hover craft, packed with latest weaponry. It's up to you to blaze a path through the streets and tunnels of earth's under-

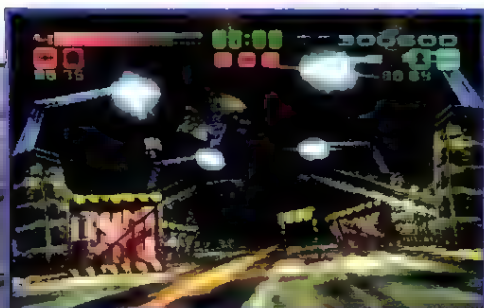
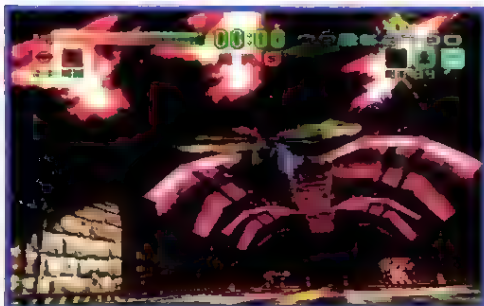
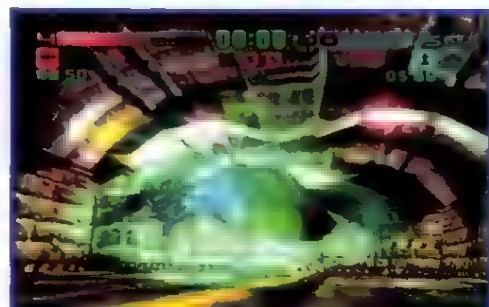
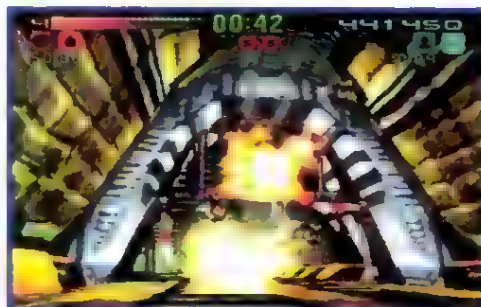
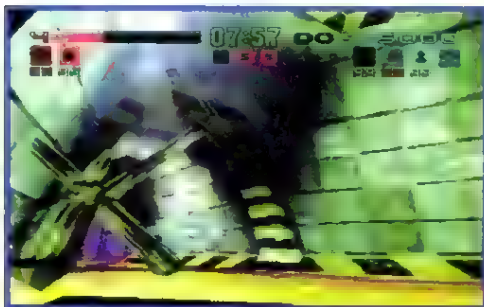
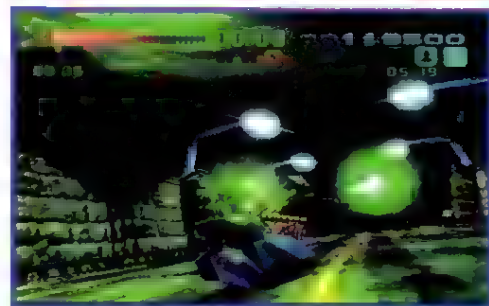
belly, with the ultimate goal being to stop this mad man from launching his doomsday weapon ... and so it goes. Get ready to play one of this year's coolest shooters.

Tunnel B1 is a unique mixture of tight gameplay (which involves shooting, driving and puzzle solving) and stunning special effects — the likes of which I have not seen on the PlayStation. Each level has multiple objectives that you must fulfill in order to move on to the next. Some have you locating weapon upgrades that are placed somewhere deep within the level, or speeding down obstacle-laden tunnels to reach a checkpoint before your time runs out, while others have you targeting and taking out specific generators that control the level's energy fields. Each level is ingeniously laid out and gets just a little bit harder than the last.

The game controls a little tricky, at first, forcing you to use every button on the PlayStation's controller. Thankfully, there's an option that lets you configure the buttons any way you want, which I think every game should



EXTRATED



offer.

The graphics are absolutely brilliant, showcasing the true power of the PlayStation's hardware. I've never seen so many unbelievably incredible special-effects crammed into one game. There's amazing multi-colored light sourcing to be found everywhere, incredible explosions that flash brilliantly and fill up the whole screen with lens flares, and texture smoothing that rivals the N64's mip-mapping abilities.

The 3D engine is equally impressive, moving along at an ultra-smooth 30 frames per second — screen-shots alone cannot do this game justice.

The last noteworthy

feature is the soundtrack, which sounds like it could have been composed by Star Wars' composer John Williams himself and perfectly fits the game's dark and hostile atmosphere.

With all this praise, it makes you wonder if there are any downsides to Tunnel B1. Well, not really — except for maybe the lack of any other perspectives other than the low, first person, vantage point. It's a great game visually, aurally and intellectually, and one you should definitely check out. This will be one of my personal favorites for '96, no doubt!

Greg

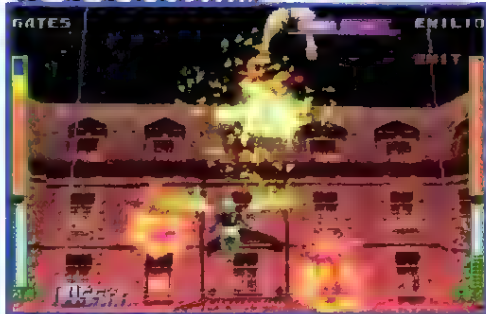
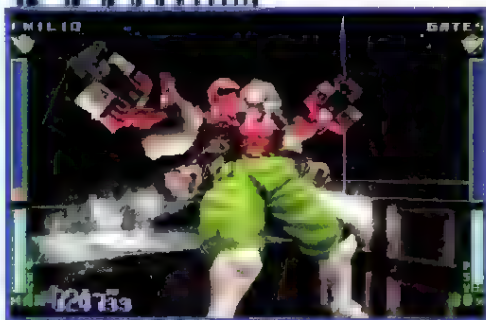


THE BOTTOM LINE

With all this praise, it makes you wonder if there are any downsides to Tunnel B1. Well, not really — except for maybe the lack of any other perspectives other than the low, first person, vantage point. It's a great game visually, aurally and intellectually, and one you should definitely check out. This will be one of my personal favorites for '96, no doubt

92%





PSYCHIC FORCE

TAITO • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

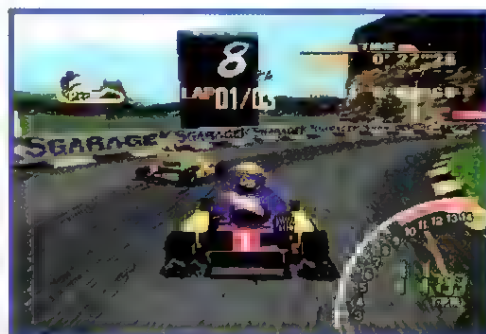
Even though the coin-op version of Taito's 3D one-on-one fighter, *Psychic Force*, is currently enjoying success in the arcades, the home console version has already released for the PlayStation in Japan. These days, with the unbelievable glut of 3D fighters already available, and more on the way, developers are searching for a new twist on the tried-and-true theme and it looks like Taito might have the answer. *Psychic Force* uses a free-floating arena, high up in the air, from which to do battle. All of the characters are comprised of the usual polygons and can shoot fireballs and the like from a distance, or get in close and pummel with fists. The backgrounds and character detail are quite nice and, from the short time we've had with the game, it looks like it comes packed with combos and special moves. We haven't heard if this one is being picked up for a stateside release, but it's probably a good bet.



KART DUEL

GAPS, INC • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

It was only a matter of time until there was a Go-kart simulation released for the PlayStation (since it seems just about every other style of racing has been tried and done.) And, as far as Go-kart racing goes, Aryton Senna's *Kart Duel* is a pretty good effort. Although there isn't much detail in terms of character graphics or roadside objects, the fast and furious pace of the gameplay and the squeal of those mini-engines convey the feel you get when cruising around the tracks at 30 mph at your local Malibu Grand Prix. In addition, to the race modes, there is also a tear-jerking, heart-felt, pictorial tribute to Aryton Senna, showcasing the racing legend in different stages of his life and career. *Kart Duel* is currently available in Japan and, at this time, there is no word of an American release.



EXPERIMENT

INTERNATIONAL MOTO X

COCONUTS • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

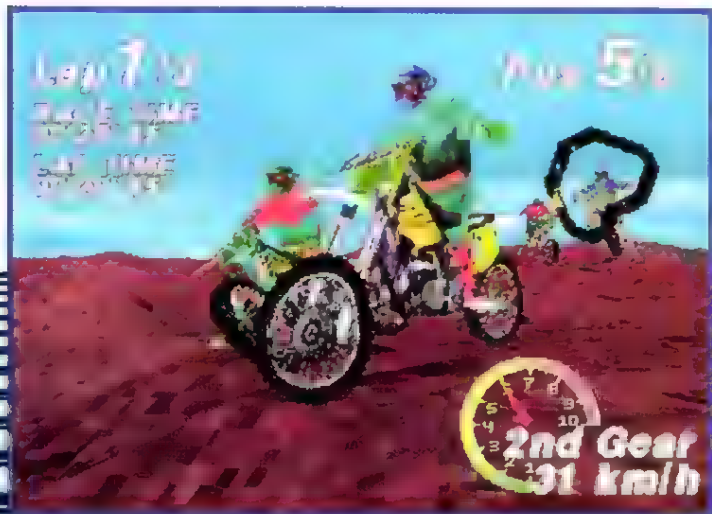
Coconuts' International Moto X is, probably, one of, if not THE, worst excuse for a 32-bit videogame that we have yet to see at the offices of Dimension Publishing here in beautiful Foster City. The game has absolutely no ties to the real sport, moves at a super-slow rate of ten frames per second (at best!) and literally has



three frames of animation for the bike and rider combined. It's amazing that this game was ever published (even by Japan's looser standards.) From the shoddy pastel-colored graphics, to the unrealistic terrain, there are absolutely no redeeming features about International Moto X. It's painfully obvious that the European developers spent little to no time in the R&D phase and just slapped together their version of Motocross.



Although, we've told you, in the past, to stay away from certain games, we really mean it this time. Import buyer beware! Only a die-hard gamer would even consider renting this game.

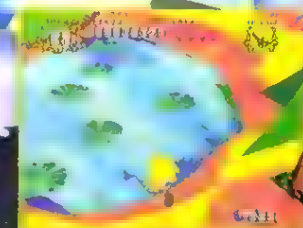
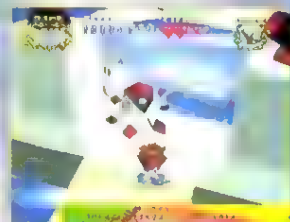
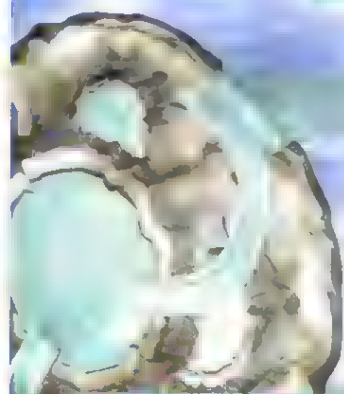


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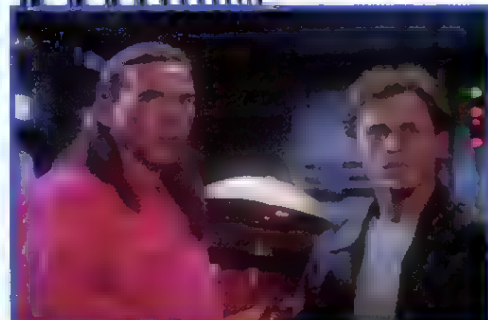
T-HQ



SPEED RACER

TOMY • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

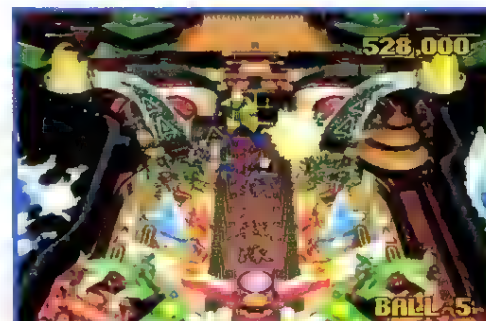
Everybody sing along ... "Here he comes, here comes BLANK BLANK, he's a demon on wheels." If you know how to fill in those two blanks, then you will be breathlessly waiting the arrival of Tomy's Speed Racer on American shores. If not, then you probably weren't a latch-key kid, have no idea who or what a Spridle and Chim-Chim are, are clueless about Racer X's true identity, think Trixie are for kids, and, in general, had better things to do in the '70's and '80's. Speed Racer takes Ridge Racer play mechanics and adds that certain something that only the Mach 5 can provide: namely gadgets, gadgets and more gadgets. Speed Racer allows the player to take multiple routes in any given course, using things like the Tire Belts, Gizmo, the Auto Jack, Saw Blades, etc. You can even race underwater, and cut down a few trees as you cut through the forest. Speed Racer has not found an American publisher yet, but we expect that it will.



POWER RANGERS PINBALL

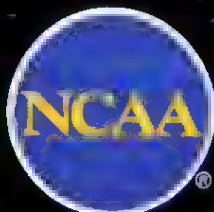
BANDAI • AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

Although they've been doing it for years, (who can forget Bill Budge's Pinball Construction Set on the Apple II or Video Pinball for the Atari 2600) Pinball hasn't been one of the more popular conversions, from the arcades and liquor stores of America, to home console format. Add in the unlikely, and somewhat stale, (in America at least) Power Rangers license and you have one of the more quirky titles (if that's possible) released in Japan this year. Surprisingly, Bandai's Power Ranger's Pinball is actually quite good, with a multitude of different tables to play on, in the PlayStation's sparkling high-resolution mode and, inbetween, FMV sequences from the TV series. What's more, the game follows a plot, versus just mindless pinball, with actual bosses in to do battle with. Power Rangers is currently out in Japan and we wouldn't be surprised if it eventually shows up on our shores.



EXPORT

THE GREAT



FOOTBALL

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prize is unavailable. Prizes are non-transferable and no substitutions are allowed. Any age may participate however, if the winner is a minor, the prize will be awarded to the minor's parent or legal guardian. Return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and another prize winner will be selected. Winner may be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 7 days of receipt of forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner agrees to the use of his/her name and/or likeness for the purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of SCEA and its parent or affiliated companies, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that winners might incur as a result of this sweepstakes or receipt of prize. For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Great GameBreaker Giveaway, Winners, 919 E. Hillsdale Boulevard,

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The PS Extreme Historical Ranking Chart

EXCAVATE is the section where we dig up the last six months of our old ratings and present them on one easy-to-read page, along with a little explanation/breakdown of our rating system. Use this as your buying guide throughout the year and as a reference for those older games that you might have missed (or wish you had).

GOLD GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
NCAA GameBreaker	October 1996	98%
Tekken 2	September 1996	98%
Crash Bandicoot	September 1996	98%
Motor Toon Grand Prix	October 1996	95%
Formula 1	November 1996	95%
Fade to Black	July 1996	94%
Star Gladiator	October 1996	93%
Die Hard Trilogy	September 1996	93%
Jumping Flash 2	August 1996	93%
Ridge Racer Revolution	September 1996	92%
Triple Play 97	July 1996	92%
NHL Powerplay 96	July 1996	92%
Namco Museum Vol. 1	August 1996	92%
Tecmo's Deception	November 1996	92%
Street Fighter Alpha 2	October 1996	91%
Worms	September 1996	91%
International Track & Field	July 1996	91%
Black Dawn	November 1996	90%
Bust-A-Move 2	August 1996	90%

SILVER GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
Andretti Racing	October 1996	89%
V Tennis	August 1996	89%
Burning Road	November 1996	88%
Top Gun	July 1996	88%
Wipeout XL	October 1996	88%
Final Doom	October 1996	87%
Adidas Power Soccer	August 1996	87%
Tobal No. 1	November 1996	87%
Tokyo Highway Battle	September 1996	86%
Skeleton Warriors	July 1996	86%
Epidemic	November 1996	86%
Project Overkill	September 1996	85%

Time Commando	November 1996	85%
Spot Goes to Hollywood	October 1996	84%
Battle Arena Toshinden 2	July 1996	84%
Legacy of Kain	October 1996	82%
Namco Museum Volume 2	November 1996	82%
Robo Pit	June 1996	81%
Wing Commander III	June 1996	80%

BRONZE GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
Floating Runner	July 1996	79%
Bogey: Dead Six	August 1996	79%
Perfect Weapon	November 1996	79%
Impact Racing	October 1996	78%
Gunship	September 1996	78%
Blazing Dragons	June 1996	78%
Madden 97	October 1996	77%
Project: Horned Owl	August 1996	76%
Olympic Soccer	August 1996	75%
Shell Shock	June 1996	74%
Beyond the Beyond	September 1996	73%
NFL Quarterback Club 97	November 1996	72%
Tecmo Super Bowl	November 1996	72%
Grid Runner	October 1996	71%
Space Hulk	August 1996	70%
Tecmo World Golf	August 1996	70%
Final Round Golf	July 1996	70%

TIN GAMES	ISSUE	RATING
Big Hurt Baseball	August 1996	69%
King of Fighters '95	November 1996	69%
Tetris Plus	November 1996	68%
Olympic Summer Games	September 1996	68%
Casper	November 1996	65%
Sim City 2000	September 1996	58%

WHAT DO ALL THOSE NUMBERS MEAN?



90-99%

"Must buy" games; only the best of the best get Gold. We stand behind these games.



80-89%

Great games, but lacking in some area; usually, for fans of that style of game.



70-79%

Mediocre titles that suffer from some serious flaws. Rent -- don't buy

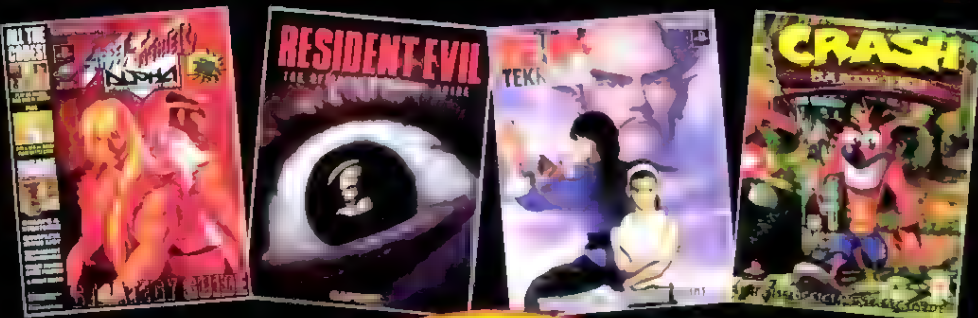


0-69%

Tin games are to be avoided at all costs. Only die-hard gamers would buy these.

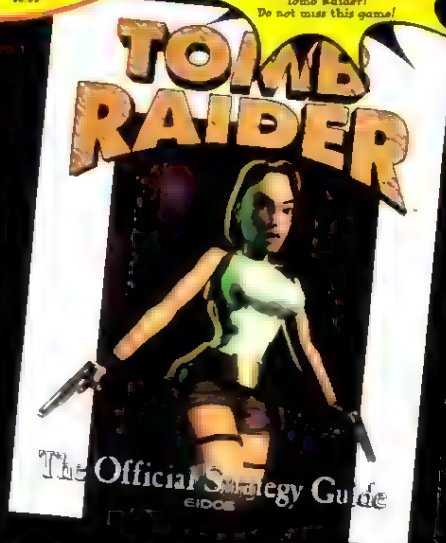
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